

## A New Breed

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Summary: Five years after the defeat of the Red Death, Dragons have gotten along well with viking life. Hiccup has spent most of his time dealing with small problems that have arisen with life with dragons. When a neighboring country asks for help, both their worlds will set aside their differences to confront the most dangerous breed of dragons any of them has ever faced.

### 1. Chapter 1

**\*\*AN\*\***

**\*\*First Brave/How To Train Your Dragon fanfic. Hope you all enjoy. Characters aren't written with accents because i don't want to murder anyone's language. Maybe in a latter fanfic of this I will. Until then. R&R!\*\***

#### Chapter 1

Welcome to Berk

\_ This is Berk. It's twelve days north of Hopeless, and a few degrees south of Freezing to Death. It's located solidly on the Meridian of Misery. It snows nine months out of the year and hails the other three. Any food that grows here is tough and tasteless. The people that grow here are even more so. The only upside are the pets. While other places have ponies...or parrots...we have...dragons...\_

A group of young vikings walked along a narrow path and entered a large arena like structure with a large cage covering it. The arena used to be used for dragon training and killing, but has now been repurposed. Welcome to Hiccups Dragon Riding Training Academy. "Anyone know where Hiccup is?" A blond teen asked. She was roughly 17 and had metallic shoulder pads on either shoulder. She had a red shirt on that was tucked neatly into a skulled belt and skirt. Her name was Astrid Hofferson. One of the bravest and strongest Viking in

Berk, and she was still only a teen. A tall blonde male spoke next.

"Can't we just take a break? We've been doing a lot of work already and I'm done." His shoulders slumped as he looked towards the others for support. He wore a fur vest that exposed a light green tunic. Both his arms were wrapped in a green wrapping that started at his wrists and stopped at his elbow. A dragon tooth hung from his neck and a double horned helmet rested on his head. Tuffnut Thorston was his name and he is one of the most mischievous and masochists persons you could ever meet. He was only rivaled by his twin sister for his knack for pain.

"Like what Tuff? You've been sitting and sleeping all day. We're the ones that have been working." A tall blonde said. Her name was Ruffnut Thorston, Tuffnuts sister, twin to be exact. She was taller than Astrid, but she slouched a lot so it didn't appear like it. She wore a greenish tan vest and skirt with a blue shirt. Like her twin, she had a dragon tooth around her neck and a double horned vikings helmet, though the horns were slightly longer than her brothers. If pain had a physical form, it would be the Thorston twins.

"My eyeballs get tired ok!" Tuffnut replied turning to face Ruffnut on his right.

"Why don't you make your name proud and TUFFen up?" Ruffnut replied rolling her eyes and softly chuckling at her own joke.

Tuffnut didn't get it though and looked at her with a confused expression. "I don't get it. What's Tuff have anything to do with tough?" He looked around at the others to see if they got it, which they did.

"Your an idiot you know that?"

"Eh. Runs in the family. How else do we explain your remark?"

"Why you..."

The Thorston twins could turn a simple sentence into a full on argument. Which usually escalated into a brawl that involved someone in the group to break up. Which was the case now as the pair rolled around on the floor kicking, punching, and biting. Which Tuffnut personally experienced as Ruffnut latched onto his arm with her teeth. Reacting on instinct, Tuffnut grabbed a handful of hair and began to pull, which only led Ruffnut to bite harder, which made Tuffnut pull harder, which...well I think you get the picture.

A medium sized boy by the name of Snotlout smirked at the pair, who were now standing, but still biting/grabbing each other. "My money's on Ruff." He spoke, leaning towards a heavy set viking by the name of Fishlegs.

Snotlout wore a dark furred vest with a tan shirt that exposed the top portion of his chest. He had a black belt on with a skull in the center representing the Jorgensen family crest. He had brown cuffs on that protected his wrists and forearms. Unlike the twins Snotlout had a single horned helmet on that curved in a loop near the helmet before presiding away from his head.

Fishlegs on the other hand was by far the largest, and tallest of the others. He wore a giant fur coat that covered his entire body and only exposed his legs and feet. On his head he had a helmet that was comparable to a grown man wearing a child's hat. The horns didn't even reach out past his shoulders and made it that much more comedic on him. Over the years though his pudgy features and stomach had become more toned and muscled and he looked like quite the viking.

Astrid stepped up to the twins from behind and grabbed them by the scruff of their shirts. "When are you two ever going to grow up?" She said pulling the two apart, but failing as the two clung tighter towards each other. Astrid sighed in annoyance before resorting to grabbing them by their hair and pulling very violently towards the ground. The twins yelled in pain and collapsed onto the ground, both forgetting the fight as they rubbed their heads. "I think she took a chunk of my hair out!" Ruffnut exclaimed as she examined her braided hair to find a nice length of hair missing. "Sorry that was me." Tuff said holding up a lock of his sister's hair. She grabbed the hair and punched her brother hard in the face sending him skidding to a stop in front of the other males of the group.

"Your sister has a mean punch Tuff." Fishlegs said looking at the dazed expression on the young man. "Ah, that's nothin'. She hits like a girl. Going to take a whole lot more to take this viking down." Tuff replied struggling to stand up and wobbling before falling back down, his helmet slanted so it covered one eye. "Well this GIRL just knocked your lights out." Ruffnut said swinging a fist at him to signal she'd be more than happy to turn his lights out again. "What?! It was a compliment! Viking women can beat up any man they could get their hands on!" Tuff said scrambling to his feet and hiding behind Fishlegs whose eyes widen at the realization that he was in the potential crossfire of the dispute. Fishlegs slowly side stepped away leaving Tuffnut to fend for himself if Ruff decided the beating he already got wasn't smirked and grinned mischievously at her brother. "And don't you forget it."

"Uh...guys...now that that dispute is over. Anyone know where Hiccup is? He's never late." Fishlegs asked looking around the arena for their comrade. "He's talking to his dad today for some 'special' mission." Snotlout said sitting down on the stone floor with his legs sprawled out. "And how do you know this?" Astrid said crossing her arms. "Easy. My dad's supposed to attend this meeting with them. Gobbers going too. Have no idea why though." Snotlout replied casually, though a hint of jealousy was present in his voice. After the battle with the Red Death Hiccup has been given a lot more responsibility. Any incident involving a dragon would be discussed with Hiccup before action would be taken. Any mission that involved a new type of dragon or strange occurrences believed to be caused by dragons would be discussed between Hiccup, Stoick (the chief), Gobber (Stoick's oldest friend and head blacksmith), and Spitelout (Hiccup's uncle and Snotlout's father). Today was one of those days, but something seemed off. His dad seemed a bit more stressed heading towards this meeting than any of the previous ones he attended.

Snotlout wasn't jealous that Hiccup attended these private meetings, what he WAS jealous though, was the little runt becoming a very important figure both in the village and to the other tribes. "Your jealous." Tuffnut said smiling a toothy smile. This automatically snapped Snotlout out of his trance. "I am not!" Snotlout yelled

standing up and glaring angrily at Tuffnut. "Hey. Don't sweat it. If I was in your position I would be jealous too. I mean, you were sure to be the next Chief until Hiccup learned how to ride a dragon, a Night Fury at that. There's no way you're going to be Chief with his reputation. That's all that matters now. Riding dragons. The better the rider the more respect. And let's be honest, you and..." Tuffnut chuckled at this, "Snotface aren't really in the race for best riders." Ruffnut also chuckled at this and smiled. "Can't believe you named him that." Astrid closed her eyes and shook her head, also stifling a laugh. "Worst name ever, no wonder the poor guy burns and abuses you when he can." Fishlegs' eyes brightened at the thought of this. "Never occurred to me that a name could determine behavior. I wonder if dragons are smart enough to base their emotions off names." He pulled out a notebook and began writing something down.

"Ugh! I renamed him to Hookfang guys! We went over this! And what you talking about not being the best riders?!" Snotlout yelled, his face darkened from anger. "You two fight more than me and Ruff." Tuffnut said chuckling and pointing towards his sister. "And that's saying ALOT." Snotlout huffed in irritation. "Fine! If the runt decides to show up then come and get me!" And with that, Snotlout stormed out of the arena. Tuffnut watched as Snotlout stormed out before looking back at the group. "What I say?" Astrid rolled her eyes and began walking towards the exit. "Come on. We'll check the mead hall to see if he's there. If so we'll wait till he gets out."

"And if not?" Fishlegs asked raising his hand up slightly signifying he was asking a question. "Then we'll board our dragons and look for him." Astrid said not even giving a second glance towards them. The others watched her for awhile before they scampered off to catch up to her.

Four vikings sat around a large table inside the mead hall. On top of the table laid a map of the known world to the vikings (which is surprisingly a lot). Most of Europe was drawn out and a nice chunk of Greenland was also drawn. The rest of the map was blank and riddled with drawings of mythical animals that were said to roam the edges of the world. A large man huffed in irritation. He wore a grey tunic that had no sleeves with a leather belt that had iron bolts all along it. A large fur pelt draped from his shoulders down his back; on top of the fur were two iron discs, one on each shoulder, that were engraved with the Jorgensen family crest. His name was Spitelout Jorgenson and by his facial expression, he was definitely not in a good mood.

Standing next to him was a massive viking with his right hand replaced with a mug. His left foot was also gone. He had a blond braided beard that stopped at his stomach. He wore a tan shirt and a pair of brown pants that was a size too small. His face and hands were calloused from the years of working in a forge. A large helmet sat on his head that had horns that went a good foot straight up into the air. He was the tribe's blacksmith and Stoick's oldest friend, Gobber.

Standing next to him was the largest viking of the group.. His stunning red beard set him apart from any other. He was Stoick the vast, Chief of the Hairy Hooligans. He wore a turquoise tunic and had a large fur pelt draped from his shoulders that signified he was the Chief. A riveted leather belt wrapped around his torso with an inscription of a dragon on it. Dangling from the belt were iron

plated chain mail that stopped at his knees in a repeating triangle pattern around his body. On both arms he wore riveted leather cuffs that started at his wrist and ended at his elbow. The man was absolutely huge and poised as a serious threat to anyone who crossed paths with him. His tree trunk like arms rested on the table. He examined the map carefully before looking over to the viking on his right.

He was skinny but well toned and covered in leather armor from head to toe. On either shoulder he had black armor they dubbed "Dragon Skin". He had a chest piece made of the same black material that stopped at the end of his ribcage. His right Shoulder pad was thicker and had red paint on it resembling a fanged mouth.. A strap that came across his chest had the Hairy Hooligan crest inscribed on it showing all to the world he was a Hairy Hooligan, a viking. A helmet sat next to him that was black like the rest of his armor. Small spikes came out of his helmet and moved backwards giving it a more 'demonic' look. The entire outfit looked quite intimidating. Though most thought the metal leg he had gave him a handicap; instead the metal leg has proven its worth and has been customized to become a 'swiss army knife'. The vikings name was Hiccup Horrendous Haddock III, the first dragon rider. He had grown up much from his encounter with the Red Death and was now shaping up to fit the role of a true Viking, yet in his own way.

Hiccup had been given the task of ensuring dragon cooperation with Berks everyday life and since things have been running smooth at Berk he has had the opportunity to help other tribes. Hiccup now acted as a dragon 'expert' that traveled to nearby tribes to solve their dragon problem. He never taught them the secrets to ride though, for fear of a dragon war being blamed on Berk. Dragon riding was a closely guarded secret of Berk. He would teach them what to do and even started up a few dragon training schools to teach the dangers of dragons. Messages of help were common and Hiccup would regularly make trips to other Viking clans. This latest message was nothing but regular and had caused a heated debate over the issue.

"I don't like it Stoick. They have never asked for our help before, hell, I didn't even know dragons lived that far!" Spitelout said eyeing the map angrily.

"I know your concern and I agree with ya. But this is the fifth message this month and their saying the attacks are growing more and more frequent." Stoick said rubbing his temple. "And we've already told them everything we can without actually being there. Our last option is to send Hiccup there and figure out what's causing these attacks."

"But Stoick! We've been at war with them for YEARS! Only in the last decade have we finally found peace! What if they try to kidnap Hiccup and use him as ransom, hm?"

"Spitelout. Do I need to remind you it was their current King and me that finally managed to settle the war? I doubt he'll want to start another. And Hiccup won't be alone this time. I think Fishlegs should accompany him." At this Hiccup's eyes widen and he looked over at his dad. "You sure dad?" Hiccup said looking back towards the map. "Aye I'm sure. It's the best thing to do. You've never been this far from home and if they do have a dragon problem Fishlegs could prove to be very valuable, unless you'd prefer Astrid to accompany you instead?"

Stoick said glancing at Hiccup with a knowing smirk on his face. Hiccup instantly lost his composure and turned a shade of pink. "Uh...n-no." Hiccups voice cracked. "Fishlegs is a perfect candidate." He finished, his voice returning to normal. Astrid and Hiccup have been dating for awhile now and pretty soon it was to be expected of them to...well...take the next step. Any mention of...\_THAT\_...and Hiccup turned back into a stuttering fishbone. "When do we leave?"

Stoick chuckled and patted his son on the back. "You leave in a few hours to inform them that another rider will be there shortly. Both of ya can't show up at the same time now. Bad enough you'll be showing up unannounced as is. Fishlegs will arrive in a week. Should give them plenty of time to adapt to Toothless." Stoick said. At the mention of his name, a large black dragon jumped down from a perch. Yellow-green eyes stared at them as the dragon sat next to Hiccup and nudged him for attention. One of his tail fins were replaced by a man made one that had a few wires that led towards a saddle and connected to a stirrup that controlled the fin. A closer inspection revealed a bluish tint to his scales and natural curiosity in his eyes. Hiccup smiled and scratched his head, getting a soft purr from the dragon.

"Aye. Can't have them be prepared for ya if they are planning an ambush." Gobber said smirking, imagining the surprised faces on them when they see Hiccup show up out of the blue. "Well that settles that. Go on Hiccup. Meet me at the docks when you're ready to leave." Stoick said nudging his son along. "Come on Toothless. We gotta get ready for our trip." And with that, the pair bolted out of the hall, having a little race to see who could get to their house first.

"And if not?" Spitelout said, still having an angry expression on his face. Stoick turned and looked at him. "If not what?" Gobber said, also having turned to look at the viking.

"If there are no dragon attacks. If this is all an elaborate setup to capture our best ridder." Stoick eyed him for what seemed like hours before turning back at the map. "Then we'll teach them what a dragon attack is like. Scotland would burn for their treachery." Spitelout grinned at this before giving him a nod of approval.

## 2. Chapter 2

**\*\*AN\*\***

**\*\*Hope you enjoy this chapter! Was done yesterday, but was out all day fixing grandmas pool so late update. Hope this is worth the wait. If not let me now so i can fix any future chapters.\*\***

### Chapter 2

Welcome to the Highlands

\_Some say our destiny is tied to the land, as much a part of us as we are of it. Others say fate is woven together like a cloth, so that one's destiny intertwines with many others. It's the one thing we search for, or fight to change. Some never find it. But there are some who are led.\_

In Scotland a proud kingdom stood. The king of the land ran a fair and just land with his queen. The pair had four children, three young triplets by the names of Harris, Hubert, and Hamish. The oldest a young woman, around the age of 17 named Merida. The King and Queen sat on either end of a long table with their triplet boys in the middle.

The Queen sat in a normal sized chair and had a stunning green dress on. Her brunette hair went down past her back. A tiara with an emerald in the middle sat atop her head. Her head was held high as she slowly ate her food in the manner demanded by a queen, slow and steadily. Her husband on the other hand...

The King sat in a large chair with a plate full of meat in front of him. He grabbed a turkey leg and took a large bite out of it, hardly chewing, and swallowed ravenously. The entire spectacle would have sent shivers down anyones back who was not accustomed to such habits. He had on a blue, purple, and green kilt on with a huge leather belt on. Around his chest he wore leather armor with chainmail around his shoulders. His hair was red and he had two massive wristbands rested on each wrist as the king waved his arms about, obviously telling a tale. "I saw something that day, something I'll not forget. It stands 12 feet tall, with razor sharp claws. Its hide littered with the weapons of fallen warriors. Its face scarred with one dead eye."

At this one of the triplets mocked the king word for word, motion for motion; including widening one of his eyes and pointing to it. Another had fallen asleep and had his head rested inside of a bowl. Another played with his food, bored from a story told a million times. Each one of them looked identical towards the other. Each had on a kilt resembling their fathers and had vibrant red hair and blue eyes. "I drew my sword and-"

"WHOOSH!" A redheaded teen yelled as she appeared between two of the triplets. The last being startled awake and falling out of his seat. The triplets were now wide awake and looked excitingly at their sister. She had on a blue dress that showed she was a princess of the clan. Her fiery red hair and stunning blue eyes told all that she was an independent being. A bow strung along her back showed that she was no ordinary princess. "One swipe his sword shattered then CHOMP! Dads leg was clean off! Down the monsters throat it went. " She said, now standing beside her dad and taking up a seat on the other side of her brothers.

"AWWW! That was my favorite part!" King Fergus whined sounding disappointed. "It wouldn't be until years later, that Mordru the demon bear would fall. Not to some warrior though. Instead he would meet his demise at the hands of the Queen as she protected her children." Merida said sitting down, glancing towards her mom. She looked from her brothers to her father and smiled. "Sorry dad." The King smiled softly at her and nodded his head. "Its ok, I think my new favorite part is when your mom killed the beast." The king whispered to her, covering his mouth with the remnants of the turkey leg. "I heard that." Queen Elinor said looking up from her dinner towards her husband.

The front door burst open and in ran a guard covered in armor. "Your highnesses! The dragons! They've returned and are attacking the farms!" Fergus immediately stood up. "Gather the men! Put the castle on lockdown. Elinor! Take the children to the tunnels until I come

and get you." A loud boom rocked the great dining hall. The chandelier above them rocked side to side as dust fell from the roof. The castle had now become part of the dragons attack.

Elinor stood fast and grabbed the triplets. "Maudie! Help me take them to the tunnels!" A maid ran in, her face panicked and her hands shaking. She scooped up two of the boys and held them in her arms before rushing off. Elinor grabbed her last child, Harris, and ran over to her daughter. "Let's go Merida!" She grabbed Merida by the hand and began to pull her along before Merida stopped. "I can help though! Just give me a chance and I can help dad!"

"It's too dangerous! Them beasts have already killed a dozen of our soldiers. The battlefield is no place for a princess." Elinor said tugging Merida again. Merida knew she was right and with a depressed sigh, followed her mom.

King Fergus stood in the center of the castle square. His booming voice rang clear throughout the chaos. Dragons flew above them. A large explosion sent splinters flying into the air as a dwelling was hit by a fire ball. Soldiers clambered in armor ran to the roaring fire that used to be a house. Archers stood atop the towers and walls of the castle shooting countless arrows at the dragons. The dragons tough skin didn't budge as the arrows simply bounced off. "Get the animals to the woods!" Fergus yelled as a dragon swooped down and grabbed a goat before flying off into the sky. Fergus growled in anger as another goat was snatched. They had very little experience fighting dragons and the ferocity of the attacks stunned the scots.

A loud explosion caught his attention and he turned around to witness a few stones falling from one of the towers. A dragon had flown and shot at the archers there. A scream redirected his attention and he saw two archers jump off the tower as a large shadow landed on top of it. The shadow suddenly ignited and was covered completely in fire. With a mighty roar the dragon soared off into the sky. An eerie silence followed, the attack was over.

Everyone stood in stunned silence as they looked around at the damage caused by the sudden attack. A soldier ran up to Fergus and knelt before him. Fergus sighed and looked over at him. "How bad is it?" The soldier stood and sighed before wiping a bit of blood off his brow. "Three dead, nine injured, two houses burned to the ground, six cattle taken, three goats, four chickens, and the furnaces in the forge are badly damaged. Campbell is one of the injured so we can't expect the forge to be up and running anytime soon." Fergus sighed heavily and looked towards the forge, sure enough a large hole was in the roof and a few of the furnaces were thrown about and destroyed. Campbell was the head blacksmith and ran everything involving the smith. The lost of the forge would be crippling, the inability to produce weapons or repair things could be costly in the long term. "What about Alan? Couldn't he run the forge?" Alan was a young apprentice of Campbell, no older than 14 but showed extreme talent in blacksmithing.

The soldier's face fell and he looked down towards the ground. "One of the dead your highness." Fergus blood ran cold and he looked once again towards the forge. He had personally known Alans parents and pushed for him to be a blacksmith. He couldn't help but feel guilty at the lost of someone so young. "Who else?" He whispered looking



back towards the soldier. "Henric and Norra." Fergus cringed again at the names. Henric was a watchmen at the north end of town, a faithful soldier and loyal to the crown. Norra was a shepherd, most likely died trying to defend her flock.

"Alright. I'll be back at the castle. I need to speak with the Queen about these matters." The soldier nodded and left, leaving the King alone to reminisce in his thoughts, and silently mourn. Merida and Elinor weren't going to take the news lightly, they never did.

"Mum. The fightings over, we could come out now." Merida whined pacing back and forth. Anyone not involved in the fighting had taken refuge in a tunnel system beneath the castle. It was dark and cramped, not like the open grassy plains Merida was accustomed to. "Your father said to wait here. And here shall we wait." Elinor said her head still hung high, even though they were beneath the castle at the moment. "But mum! You can't expect us to just sit here!" Before the queen could replay a loud scream drew their attention. Maudi was running towards them with a look of horror on her face. She ran past them and didn't even give a second glance. A few seconds later Harris, Hubert, and Hamish came running behind her; Hamish holding out a rat and chasing her with it. "Hamish, Harris, Hubert! Drop that rat this instant!" The queen yelled, now standing up and glaring angrily at her sons. She rarely lost her temper, but there was a time and place for their mischief. The tunnels weren't one of the places.. The trio stopped mid motion and slowly glanced towards their mom. Hamish gulped and slowly lowered his hand and released the rat. "Now, when Maudi calms down from her panic attack I want each one of you to apologize to her. Understood?" The triplets nodded their head in understanding. "Good. Now, run along." Elinor waved her hand out gesturing for them to go play, hopefully without the mischief.

"The wee devils they are." Merida said smiling as her brothers ran off to go terrorize some other poor soul. "Aye. I wonder where they get it from." Elinor smiled knowingly at her daughter. Merida caught her smile and looked surprised. "Hey! Don't blame that one me!" The queen smiled and sat back down. At that moment the door leading into the tunnel swung open and King Fergus walked in. "Dad!" Merida yelled before running up and jumping on the large man. Fergus smiled and wrapped his arms around his daughter. Elinor stood up and looked at her husband over Merida's shoulder. The look she gave him asked him how bad it was. Fergus facepaled and he couldn't look her in the eye. She knew people had died tonight. A pain came at her heart but she subdued her emotions. A queen can not let her emotions get the better of her.

Merida felt the tension take hold of her dad and let go of to stare at his sullen face. "How bad was it?" Merida said, an unsettling feeling stirring in her stomach. Fergus looked from his daughter to his wife, unsure if he should actually tell her. Elinor seemed to debate this idea for a moment before nodding her head 'yes'. Fergus looked at Merida and took one of her hands. "We lost a lot of animals in the attack. The forge is all but destroyed and Campbell is injured. Nine others, including him, are also injured." He paused, debating on whether or not to say the next bite of news. Swallowing back any bit of hesitation, Fergus continued. "Henric, Norra, and Alan died in the attack." Fergus lightly sighed at this, glad to have got it done and over with it.

Merida stared in shock at her father. "Are you...are you sure dad?"

Merida whispered, slowly absorbing what he just said. He nodded his head. "Bu-but dad! Alan was just a boy! He-he had no reason to just...die! He was young! Full of life!" Tears began to collect under her eyes as she realized she would never see the smiling boy in the smith. She saw him as a cousin that she could play with and talk to when her younger brothers couldn't. Norra...the thought of not seeing her made her fully cry now. Norra had given Angus to her when he was a wee calf. She constantly checked up on the pair and Merida saw her as an older sister. Then there was Henric. When she would sneak out of the castle it was alway under his watch. He'd give her a small wink and tell her to be back before midnight and never said a word to anyone about it.

These attacks were getting out of hand now. Each lost was heartbreaking and was like losing a family member. "Dadâ€|" She whispered now crying onto his chest as he held her tight. "Shhh...it's ok Merida. Everythings going to be fine." She pushed herself away from him. "No its not!" People are dieing everyday now and we still don't know why! Those barbaric vikings are no help either! They tell us to take 'precautions'. When we ask for them to send a rider they tell us to try something else!" Fergus looked sadly at his daughter. "I know Merida. I wish we knew how to combat these flying demons. But we simply have no idea how."

"Then let me participate in the defense!" Merida said tears still streaming out of her eyes. Fergus eyes widen at the thought. "Arrows do no good against them. We've tried. They simply bounce off their skin."

Merida straightened herself, her eyes turning from anger to determination. "That may be so! But they never had an arrow shot at them from me!"

"I'm sorry sweety. But I'm not going to allow you out there with the chance of you being killed is so likely." Merida growled in anger before storming off past her dad. "Merida!" Elinor called following her daughter before a large hand stopped her. "Leave her by Elinor. She needs time to cool off." Fergus said, his face sadden by the argument. "Do you think they'll come to help?" Elinor asked, still looking at the direction her daughter ran off in. "Stoick may not look it, but he is a kind man. He's probably arguing with the others to send someone. Probably doesn't believe we're under attack." Elinor nodded her head sadly, hope still being present that help would arrive, and soon. With that, they pair returned back to the comfort of they castle.

\*\*Hope you enjoyed the chapter! Chapter 3 is in progress at the moment.\*\*

### 3. Chapter 3

\*\*AN\*\*

\*\*Another chapter up and running! Trying to move the story along and get to the good stuff. \*\*

\*\* Comet Moon - This is in fact a Merricup story. Read this chapter and you'll understand how it ends up being one.\*\*

**\*\*Next chapter wont be probably until Tuesday. Depends how bad the first day of school is. Wish me luck and enjoy! R&R!\*\***

### Chapter 3

The journey begins

While the meeting was taking place, the other teens of berk were busy making their way towards the mead hall. Spotting a familiar black shadow sitting on top of Hiccups house the group changed course and stopped there instead. Leading the pack, Astrid slowly knocked on Hiccups door. A few seconds later the door opened to reveal the famed dragon rider. A smile spread to his lips seeing all his friends standing outside his door. "Hey guys. What's up?" His smile faded though when Astrid crossed her arms and cocked her hip to the side. "What's wrong? You skipped the meeting today at the arena." Astrid peered over his shoulder to see a large traveling bag laid on the ground.

Her eyes narrowed and she glanced back towards Hiccup. "Where you heading?" Hiccup blinked then looked at his traveling bag. "Oh...uh...wellâ€¦" How was he suppose to tell his friends he was going to scotland? Especially Astrid. She didn't believe in helping former enemies, even though they were on better terms now than ever before. "Well...theres a dragon problem and I have to get ready to go." He rubbed the back of his neck.

"Where too." Astrid said entering his house, the others quickly following. "Ya sure, come right in." Hiccup said defeated. "Must be far for you to bring an extra fin." Fishlegs said looking at a bag filled with parts he might need in case the fin broke. "Well it's going to be pretty far. The furthest we've ever been. Far enough for my dad to decide that Fishlegs would accompany me on the trip." At the mention of his name, Fishlegs walked over to Hiccup. "Cool! When are we leaving?"

"You don't even know where you're going." Astrid said irritated, Hiccup was avoiding the question. Fishlegs shrugged his shoulders. "Doesn't really matter. If I'm needed then I'll go. Problem is if Meatlug would be able to make a long trip. So where are we heading?"

"Scotland." Hiccup said nervously. All eyes widen at the word and the room took on a deathly silence. No one said a word as they all stared at one another. "Scotland? I never heard of any dragons heading that far west." Fishlegs said, his inner library running amok as he tried to determine any dragon species that flew that far. "Their reports suggested a Nightmare, apparently the dragon that keeps attacking them can light itself on fire, but they also said it can shoot spike, so it might be a Nadder." Hiccup said glad that Fishlegs was the first one to speak up.

"What do you mean? You don't know what it looks like? I mean. If this things attacked them so much they must have gotten a good glimpse to give us an accurate des...descriâ€¦" Tuffnut paused. His eyebrows furrowed as he tried to say the remainder of the word. "Discript...dospreâ€¦" He shook his head. "Aw you know what i mean." Everyone stared at him, traces of a small smile on all their faces, except Astrid. "Thats the problem Tuffnut. They never get a good look at him. They say he might even be colored black." At this Hiccup

looked towards Toothless. There was only one dragon they knew of that was black. "It can't be. Not a Night Fury. He's the only one we've ever seen. And the other details won't support that it is." Fishlegs said shaking his head in disbelief. "It has to be like the attacks that used to happen here. A variety of dragons attacking at once. There's no way one Dragon could possess all these traits." Hiccup walked up to Toothless and patted his head. "We haven't encountered attacks like that before though Fish. The attacks we've seen are always the same species. It was only with the Red Deaths control that the dragons here learned to attack together. Fishlegs, what would be the statistic of a dragon with a combination of all three traits."

Fishlegs paused his rambling and thought, pulling out his fingers to count on them. "Is it fast?"

"I assume so." Hiccup said eyeing the boy as he did a rough calculation in his head. "Night Fury: Speed 20, Stealth 18. Deadly Nadder: Firepower 18, Venom: 16. Monstrous Nightmare: Shot limit 10, Attack 15." He paused as he continued the numbers together. Both Tuffnut and Ruffnut attempted to count, but stopped when they ran out of fingers. They looked at each other's hands, hoping they'd had enough, which they didn't. Fishlegs stopped his counting and his eyes widened. "Hiccup. His overall rating is already at 97. That matches Toothless's rating. That's not even including Armor and Jaw Strength! If it has the Gronckles Armor and Jaw Strength that'll put it at 100!" Fishlegs began mumbling as he recounted his numbers. "We don't know that Fish. We're not even sure if it has all these statistics. Might just be Scottish imagination getting the best of them." Hiccup said putting a reassuring hand on Fishlegs' shoulder. The boy took a shaky breath and nodded his head. "Ya, let's hope so. Because this dragon sure sounds like a monster."

The two chuckled before a glare from Astrid silenced them both. "You're going to Scotland?" Hiccup recoiled at the tone of her voice. It was laced with venom and felt like the tiniest spark would set her off. Fishlegs gulped and took a large step back, allowing Hiccup to now be the closest person to Astrid. "Don't forget about Fishlegs." Tuffnut said, oblivious to the situation that was currently developing. Ruffnut elbowed him in the ribs. "What?! What I say?!" Ruffnut shot him a glare and Tuffnut closed his mouth, not wanting a repeat of the days earlier skirmish. Apparently that spark wouldn't come from Tuffnut though, as Astrid's angered gaze remained on Hiccup. Hiccup remained quiet, fear gripping his body as her gaze tore a hole through his body. Not seeing him speak, Astrid spoke more forcefully. "Are you going to Scotland?" She took a step forward and he instinctively took a step back. On a good day Astrid could pulverize him, on a bad day, a leg isn't the only thing Hiccup could lose. Hiccup nodded his head yes, words still not forming in his head or mouth. That was the spark that set Astrid off. "Why are you helping the enemy!? We were at WAR with them! Do you expect to be welcomed with open arms!? I won't be surprised if this is some elaborate trap! The Scottish are not to be trusted! How stupid can you be Hiccup!? You've done a lot of things to get us in trouble, but this by far is the worse! Moments like this make me wonder if you even have a brain or your brain dead like Tuffnut!" Tuffnut stared at a fly as it flew around, still oblivious to the arguing going on. Ruffnut looked at her brother and slumped her shoulders.

"What do you want me to do Astrid?!" Hiccup retaliated, angered by

the insults she threw at him. "This might be a chance to IMPROVE our relationship between our two tribes!" Astrid took another step forward, but Hiccup stood his ground. "They don't deserve ANYTHING from us except the end of a sword!" Astrid yelled, by now she was standing directly in front of Hiccup. Fishlegs snuck around her and stood by Tuffnut and Ruffnut. All watching the scene unfold. "Stop letting your emotions and what you were taught cloud your judgement!"

"My EMOTIONS? What has that to do with anything!?" Astrid roared, now fuming with anger. Hiccups face fell as he looked towards the ground. "We know that your dad died during the war, but that doesn't mean we shouldn't make amends with them." Astrid growled in anger at Hiccup. "And what if this situation was about Alvin and the other outcasts, hm? Would we be having this conversation if the Scottish had killed \_YOUR\_ mother instead of them? You know what? We still probably would. Because you are so trusting its pathetic. If you go Hiccup, we're through." With no other exchange of words, Astrid turned and walked out of the house.

Hiccup stood in stunned silence as he watched her go. Usually Tuffnut would have something to remark in the situation, but he remained silent as they watched their friend try to absorb everything that just happened. Slowly Hiccup brought his gaze back towards his bags. Toothless walked up to him and nudged his arm sympathetically; not knowing the full extent as to what happened, but knowing it had made Hiccup sad. "Its alright bud. She'll get over it." Hiccup said quietly as he continued to pack for the trip. "What? You're still going?" Ruffnut said, surprised clearly shown in her voice and face. Hiccup looked up from his bags towards the remainder of his friends. He had momentarily forgotten they were there. "Ya. The Scots need me whether she likes it or not. She'll forgive me for it."

"And if she doesn't?" Fishlegs said nervously, fidgeting from the fight that had taken place. Hiccup paused and sighed sadly. "Then it wasn't ment. Mind meeting me at the docks in a few hours? Give me plenty of time to pack." They all nodded 'yes' and left Hiccup and Toothless to their thoughts.

Before any of them knew it, dusk had arrived and the entire village was gathered at the stood ready as Hiccup checked his supplies one last time. \_'Change of clothes, check. Back up fin, check. Letter from the Highlands, check. Map, check. Helmet,'\_ Hiccup paused as he took out his viking helmet. It was a piece of his moms breastplate, still creepy but sentimental. He smiled and set it back in his bag. \_'check.' \_He looked over to a small satchel next to his bag. \_'Bonnlose,'\_ Hiccup again paused and looked around. With a sigh Hiccup walked over to the other side of Toothless and opened up a bag of food. Inside the bag there was no food, instead a blue Terrible Terror poked its head out and burped out a small flame.

Since the defeat of the red death, Terrible Terrors have commonly been used to carry messages through out Berk and the other Viking islands. It was the quickest and most reliable way to transport messages. "Bonnlose! That was supposed to last us two days!" The small dragon leaped out of the bag and grabbed onto Hiccups shirt. He climbed up his chest and wrapped himself affectionately around his shoulders. The dragon rubbed against Hiccups cheek in an attempt to soften his punishment. "Its ok Hiccup. We planned for that to happen and packed a spare." Gobber said handing him another bag of

food.

"Why again must you bring that messenger with you? I think any of the other ones would do." Stoick said eyeing the small dragon, which only buried its head deeper into Hiccups neck. "He's the strongest one we got Dad. Plus he hasn't lost a message yet. With these factors he's the perfect choice for this mission." Hiccup said petting the dragon affectionately. "Ya, and the dragon is really loveable. Won't get into much trouble like the others." Fishlegs said standing beside Gobber. "Unless there's a famine going on. In which case they'd probably murder him for eating a weeks worth of food in an hour." Tuffnut said chuckling. Ruffnut also laughed and nodded her head in agreement.

Toothless grumbled and wiggled around, showing he was ready for take off. "Alright, alright." Hiccup grabbed Bonnlose and put him in the satchel. The terrible terror poked his head out and looked around in excitement. Hiccup turned around and smiled at everyone that had gathered. Nearly everyone present in the village was there to see him off. Everyone but Astrid. "Take care Hiccup." Stoick said, his voice was firm, but a hint of worry was present. "I'll be fine. I'll send Bonnlose back as soon as we reach land. If I don't replyâ€¦" Stoick nodded his head in understanding. "I'll give you only five days to reply once we send him off. If you don't reply till then we'll assume the worse. That goes for your entire duration there." Hiccup nodded his head and hopped up onto Toothless. "You ready bud?" Toothless wiggled in excitement. Hiccup turned toward Fishlegs. "See you in a week." Fishlegs nodded his head. Toothless crouched and opened up his wings. With a powerful push the trio were up in the air soaring high above berk. Hiccup stirred Toothless towards the setting sun. They were heading west now, towards the unknown, towards the Highlands.

#### 4. Chapter 4

**\*\*AN\*\***

**\*\*Uhhhhh...oops. Sorry about that. Had no idea I did that until now. Here's chapter four. This one took a lot out of me so I'm a bit brain dead here. Specially since its 5:00 and I'm off to school.\*\***

**\*\* Comet Moon - Yes it is the same helmet from the trailer. Though that might change due to circumstances that will arise latter on. And most likely its reforged because Stoick is supposed to wear it too. But his seems smaller than Hiccups. Though that may be just the size difference. Which is pretty drastic then.\*\***

**\*\* LettersUnWritten - I hope the formatting on this one is better on the eyes. I tried to space out the dialog as much as i can. Though this chapter is more about plot movement then character interaction. If its not then tell me and I'll try something else to help out on the eyes. \*\***

**\*\*Well R&R!\*\***

#### Chapter 4

##### First Encounter

The wind swept through Meridas hair as she galloped on Angus through the woods. She swung from left to right as she quickly notched an arrow and released. She had perfected her accuracy against the targets. The only thing to do now was perfect her speed. Within a few short seconds she had already released four more arrows. They all landed near the bullseye, but not a single one has yet hit its mark. Merida slowed angus down till they came to a dead stop. She huffed in the exertion of pulling back the bowstring so many times in quick succession. Rolling her shoulders, Merida jumped off Angus and preceded to collect her arrows.

"HMPH! Da says I can't shoot down a dragon. Too fast they are he says. Well! Lets see whos faster than a dragon!." Merida ranted as she went about collecting her arrows. The ones that were out of reach remained there until she took down the entire target. She mounted Angus and kicked his sides lightly.

"Come on Angus. Again!" The horse remained still though and didn't budge a single inch.

"Come on Angus. Lets go!" Angus whined and shook his head no. They had been doing this since they first woke up, and that was nearly five hours ago! Angus has had enough and turned around abruptly before trotting off towards the castle.

"Angus! What are you doing! Hey!" Angus didn't slow our change course, though the shouts of protests were beginning to annoy him. "Well if we're heading home lets at least run there!" Merida said urging the horse to run by prodding his sides with her feet once again. Angus rolled his eyes and neighed, but complained and began running towards home. They hadn't even gone three feet before Angus once again stopped dead in his tracks. Merida felt his body tense as his ears perked up. Angus ears swiveled from side to side as he listened to his surroundings.

By his posture Merida knew that Angus felt there was somebody...or some\_thing...\_near. Merida slowly pulled the bow off her back and notched an arrow. A rustle to her left drew her and Angus attention. Another rustle from behind suggested something big heading towards them, roughly 20 meters away Merida guessed. Whatever it was was now to her left as the cracking of leaves and trees escalated. A low growl startled Merida and Angus as the animal continued to circle around them. Angus was now pacing around. His body shook with fear and did little to steady Meridas nerves. A loud roar froze the pair with fear. Merida screamed as fire erupted behind them sending Angus off in a full gallop forwards.

A few short feet latter fire erupted from their left and front; forcing the pair to turn right to avoid a fiery death. More fire erupted to their left and front and once again Merida and Angus were forced to turn right. Before even of them knew it a perfect ring of fire had encircled them. Merida was now completely panicking. She had fired her bow a few times hoping to hit the beast that was attacking her, which by now she knew to be a dragon.

Angus whined loudly as he continued running in vain to find an exit. A large shadow dropped down in front of them and angus skidded to a halt. The dragon was twice...no...three times bigger than Angus. Smoke bellowed out of his nostrils with each breath. She could just make out large horns on its head and massive spikes that ran down its

back towards its tail. Which looked like a massive mace that could obliterate any poor soul that came in contact with it. Merida gulped in fear, as did Angus. The dragon was pure black but had blue circles around its body. Merida couldn't help but be reminded of clan MacKintosh; who also wore similar blue circles.

Any comfort in that thought were disintegrated as the dragon roared and leapt towards them. Merida closed her eyes tight, hoping to see her family one last time.

**\*\*5 Hours Earlier\*\***

The early morning dew clung to Hiccup's helmet as Toothless flew low to the ground. At night they two had the luxury of flying at any altitude, but once daylight broke the horizon they were forced low to the ground to avoid curious eyes that happened to look up. Toothless shook his body slightly to get rid of any water droplets that collected on his body. They had already made landfall, but were forced to keep going due to the castle's location. "We're almost there bud." Hiccup looked around and saw a piece of land that wasn't covered in trees. "Hey! You see that clearing? Let's land there to take a break." A low grumble rumbled through both stomachs and they both agreed. Bonnlose snorted in agreement.

Hiccup laughed as the little dragon stuck its head out of its bag. "Remember to stay near when we land Bonnlose. The locals aren't too friendly towards dragons." The dragon huffed a reply and Hiccup couldn't help but tell that the Terrible Terror was going to be a big problem in a small package. Toothless dived downwards and landed swiftly in a large clearing. Hiccup relaxed his muscles and slid off of Hiccup's saddle. Removing his helmet, Hiccup took a good look at his surroundings and gasped in shock. In the initial landing Hiccup hadn't noticed the large stone pillars that surrounded them on all sides.

Bonnlose whistled in appreciation. Something the Terrible Terrors learned to mimic from Vikings on Berk. "You go that right?" Hiccup replied walking towards one of the pillars. It had cracked in half and fallen over. Hiccup knelt next to it and ran a hand along its smooth surface. His prosthetic gave him some trouble standing but nothing major. He had put metal cleats on the bottom of his prosthetic to give him better traction. Hiccup returned to Toothless and opened up his rations bag. He gave a small fish to Bonnlose, who ate it whole in the blink of an eye, while he gave Toothless a larger one.

Hiccup sat down beside Toothless and began eating his ration of dried meat and hard bread. Bonnlose curled up on Hiccup's lap and yawned. "I guess a quick nap won't cause any harm." Hiccup said sighing lazily. Hiccup blinked slowly and was lulled to sleep by the steady breathing of Toothless.

A few hours later Hiccup awoke with a jolt. His head was throbbing slightly and he rubbed it before sitting up. Toothless had gotten up and was now slowly creeping towards the forest. His body language sent red flags and Hiccup quickly stood and put his helmet back on. Grabbing a small sword Hiccup slowly approached the Night Fury. "What's wrong bud?" The Night Fury hissed a reply; telling Hiccup to remain quiet.



Hiccup remained quiet and looked around. A light breeze had developed and it sent shivers up his spine. His eyes went wide with realization; someone in their group was missing. "Where's Bonnlose?" Hiccup whispered scanning the area for the Terrible Terror. Toothless didn't replay. Instead he crept into the forest, his gaze focused intently on what lied ahead. Hiccup followed behind him. Making sure to step where he stepped to ensure he didn't make any unnecessary noise.

A loud scream stopped both companions in their tracks. "Oh now. Bonnlose! They must have found him!" Toothless nodded his head in agreement and the pair took off running. Both hoping that their tiny friend would be alright until they got there. A loud roar made both dragon and riders eyes widen in surprise. It definitely wasn't a Terrible Terror's roar. They were small and squeaked a lot. This one was like a bass. Power and strength rippled through the air from such a roar. The pair exchanged a quick glance. In a single motion Hiccup hopped onto Toothless back and clicked his foot in. Toothless now running as fast as he could. Bonnlose was fine for now, but whoever screamed definitely wasn't.

Hiccup could see fire rapidly approaching them. Who ever was being attacked was on the other side. With a powerful kick of his legs, Toothless leaped over the fire. Expecting to land back on solid ground, Hiccup wasn't prepared for the jarring stop they experienced as Toothless slammed into something very large. Hiccup flew off the saddle and landed hard on his shoulder, but experience from such landings allowed him to roll to lessen the power of the blow. As he rolled Hiccup twisted his body and skidded to a stop. His prosthetic left foot was extended out behind him. The clets digging deep into the ground to slow him down. His right foot was bent slightly in front of him as if he was kneeling down.

Hiccup looked up, expecting to see Toothless and whatever they had collided with. Instead he was met with a surprised pair of blue eyes. Hiccup momentarily froze at the sight before him. A young petite woman sat atop of a giant horse. Her hair red and alive like the fire that surrounded them both. She had on a green dress with gold trimmings. A bow rested in one hand as another held an arrow. A large commotion to his right snapped his gaze away as he saw Toothless fighting with another dragon.

The unknown dragon slammed its head into Toothless side and sent Toothless crashing into a nearby tree. Snarling, the dragon turned its head back towards its first target, Merida. Hiccup ran between the two. Already knowing what the dragons intention was. Training dragons for five years gave much needed experience to Hiccup. He was able to hold his own against any dragon, besides Toothless, back on Berk. If he caused enough damage the dragons usually would submit and fly away. They weren't on Berk though. And this dragon wasn't simply going to fly away.

Hiccup ran towards the beast. Knowing that this tactic usually threw the dragon off balance since they didn't expect an attack from the smaller animal. As planned, the dragon took a few steps back, surprised by the move. Hiccup slashed at the dragons legs. The sword contacted its skins, but simply skidded off. Sending small sparks into the air. Hiccup rolled away from the slash of the dragon and put a few feet between them. Looking at the dull blade in shock. One swap had dulled the blade to the point it was better off being a stick

then a sword. It had taken him five days to craft the sword and sharpen it to his likings. He didn't have time to relish on the loss of his sword as the dragon's giant tail swept towards him.

Rolling, Hiccup barely managed to avoid a flattening strike by the giant mace. "Over here!" a voice yelled from behind the dragon. Hiccup looked and noticed the girl from earlier shooting an arrow upon the dragon. They didn't do anything except irritate the demonic dragon. Which now turned its attention back to the Scottish princess.

Before the dragon could take a step towards the princess a large paw smacked the dragon's face. Three long claw marks appeared on his face as it turned a sickly red as blood trickled out. Toothless was back in the fight. Hiccup stood besides Toothless, now holding a battle axe. Astrid had been very persuasive that he carry one on his hip at times. He'd need to thank her for that once they get him. The thought of her brought a slight pain to his chest.

The dragon stared at its opposition. Growling in annoyance it turned around and ran off into the forest. The fight, as quick it was, had really drained Hiccup and the adrenaline of it was quickly wearing off. He could feel his shouldering beginning to cramp up from the fall earlier in the fight. Pushing his own injuries aside, Hiccup turned to examine his flying friend. "You ok Toothless?" The dragon huffed and lifted up his right front leg. Three long scratches were clearly visible and bleed slightly. Hiccup knelt down to examine them closely. "Not too deep. We just got to keep it clean and it should heal soon."

Merida had by now hopped off of Angus and was slowly approaching the pair. Her bow still at the ready. Though the pair had just protected her, Merida didn't know these two and wouldn't take any chances. Merida stopped approaching once she heard the dragon growling softly at her. Hiccup turned around and noticed Merida standing a few feet behind him. He stood and wiped his hands off on his pants. "Is he going to be fine?" She asked cautiously.

"Ya. It's just a scratch. Needs to be cleaned out regularly though." Merida nodded her head and strapped her bow onto her back and placed an arrow back into the quiver. The growling from Toothless softened further, but never stopped.

Merida frowned at this. "What do I have to do to make him- it is a him isn't it?" Hiccup nodded his head yes before patting Toothless on the head. Merida continued speaking. "What do I have to do to make him stop growling."

"He doesn't trust you. Set your weapons aside and you shouldn't have a problem." Hiccup said. His tone making it seem like it was obvious. Merida glared at him before staring back at Toothless. She slowly removed her bow and quiver and set them aside. Toothless eyed them until she let them go. The moment she did this his attitude and posture changed from hostile to curious.

With the growling stopped, Merida continued to approach the pair slowly. She stopped a few feet and stared intently at Hiccup. Her gaze seemed to penetrate through his armor and helmet. Hiccup couldn't help but shuffle nervously. He knew she was analyzing him now, for what he didn't know. He didn't have to wait long before

Merida spoke up. "Your from Berk aren't you?" Hiccup couldn't help but to laugh at her accent. The deep scottish accent really enhanced her personality.

"Well?" Merida persisted. Ignoring the laughing coming from the viking. Her eyes were looked on what little eyes she saw. Hiccup stiffened from the seriousness in her voice.

"Yes. I heard that the King and Queen requested help from us." Hiccup said patting Toothless on the head again.

"You came to help with our dragon problem?" Merida said, the seriousness still present in her voice.

"I'm here until its fixed or I'm no longer welcomed." Hiccup said softly. He needed her to like him. His mission wouldn't start off well if the first scot he found ended up hating him.

Her face hardened at him. "You don't look like much of a viking." Hiccup frowned, though she couldn't see, and crossed his arms. Before he could reply her face softened and a slight blush came to her cheeks.. "Maybe it would help if I could see your face." Hiccup blinked a few times in confusion before he realized that even though he could see her fine, she couldn't.

"Oh! Ya sorry. Introductions would be nice too." His brown hair puffed out as he removed his helmet. "I'm Hiccup." He put his hand out for her to shake.

Merida face blushed a little more. He looked rather handsome than what she thought he would. And that thought had already caused her to blush. A soft smiled formed on the edges of her lips as she shook his hand. "Merida of DunBroch." Toothless grumbled and bumped Hiccup.

"Oh! This is Toothless." Hiccup said gesturing to the dragon beside him. Merida smiled and reached out to pet him, stopping half way as she waited for permission. Toothless sniffed her hand and bumped her hand with his head. Merida giggled in excitement and scratched his head. Smiling proudly at her small accomplishment. She looked from Toothless to Hiccup. "Do you have a place to stay?" Hiccup shook his head no.

"Just got here this morning." Meridas smile grew as she grabbed his hand and began pulling him along. "Come on then! You can stay at my house!" Any protest that he gave was lost as Merida dragged him hurriedly through the woods. Neither of them knew it, but this was the start of the best friendship either of them would ever have.

## 5. Chapter 5

**\*\*AN\* \*\***

**\*\*Next chapter is up! Don't forget to read chapter 4. I know the double post screwed things up but its fixed. Hope you enjoy the following chapter.\*\***

**\*\*R&R!\*\***

## Chapter 5

### First Impressions

Hiccup had to admit. This girl was STRONG. He had tried for the last fifteen minutes to try and free his hand from her cast like grip on him. "Merida! Where are we going?" Hiccup said having given up on trying to free his hand. He now focused his energy on keeping up with Merida.

"I told you we're going to my house." Merida stated rather than answered. "Now stop your whining and hurry up. Mum and Da are going to throw a fit if I'm late for lunch." Hiccup raised his eyebrows as a mischievous grin spread across his lips.

"Oh? They'll get mad at you for being late to lunch, but not for bringing a strange boy you found in the woods home huh?" Merida's long, quick strides stopped abruptly. Hiccup stumbled and nearly collided into her at the sudden stop. Toothless wasn't so fortunate and slammed head first into Hiccup's back, who then in turn crashed into Merida. Toothless grabbed the back of Hiccup's shirt with his teeth instantly.

Hiccup saw Merida falling towards the ground, falling to grab onto Angus's reins, and reacted based on instinct. He reached out and grabbed her by the waist, stopping her from falling. Hiccup couldn't help but realize how well his hands fit on her hips. It was like two pieces of a puzzle finally connecting, a magnet finding its opposite. Merida's heart was beating heavily against her chest as his hands remained there. She didn't know why, but she wanted his hands to remain there, to always remain there. But alas all things have to come to an end and she spoke up. "Uh, H-Hiccup. Y-You could let go now." Merida stuttered. Her face turned a dark pink and she thanked the gods he only saw the back of her head. Hiccup's hand snapped away from her hips as if they had just got burned.

Suppressing the recent close encounter as much as she can, Merida thought about the previous question asked. She simply couldn't show up with Hiccup in front of her mom and dad. What would she say? '\_Mum, Dad. I got attacked by a dragon in the woods. I'm fine, heck, I'm more than fine! Guess who I found in the woods? A dragon rider from Berk! Is it ok if he stays here with us?\_' Merida rolled her eyes at the thought, '\_Mum would have a heart attack at the mention of me being attacked.' \_Merida peeked behind her shoulder at Hiccup, who had suddenly turned his head and stared quite interestingly at his feet. Her face turned a deeper pink as she faced forward. She realized that she caught him staring at her. Merida shook her head at the thought. '\_Why am I even thinking these thoughts!? Come on Merida. You turned your mum into a bear a year ago to avoid a man. Now you can't stop blushing thinking about one looking at you! Specially one that you just meet! A viking nonetheless! What would mum say?\_' \_

Merida turned fully towards Hiccup, who looked up from the ground towards her. A light blush was apparent on his cheeks, though Merida would check that off to the running they just did. "Your right. I can't let you just show up to my home. Not without you meeting the King and Queen first." A smile spread across her face as his face fell. He still didn't know she was the princess. This was going to be

more fun than it should.

"I'll get you an audience with them. Don't know what they might do to you." She said, her voice hinting that it might be bad.

Hiccup stiffened at her tone. \_'What does she mean "don't know what they might do to you"? They won't dismiss me right? Or maybe execute me? What if they take me prison or something?' \_Merida smiled at his reaction. "I'm just kidding laddie. They'll be overjoyed to see you! You're such a wee lamb." She cooed and took his hand once again to pull him along. Hiccup blinked in confusion. He never heard of that term before, wee lamb. "Uhâ€¦? Thanks?" Hiccup truly didn't know how to replay to that. A rustle to their right stopped any further conversation. Toothless stiffened and growled warningly at anything that was near. Angus whined nervously and bumped Meridas side. Merida ignored him for now and pulled out her bow as Hiccup equipped his axe, ready for whatever would appear.

The rustling in the bushes stopped once Toothless growled. Toothless sniffed towards the bush and sighed annoyingly. He sat down and stared at the bush. Hiccup raised an eyebrow and looked from Toothless to the bush. Toothless body language made it clear there was no danger. "What is it bud?" As Hiccup turned to face the bush once again, a blue blur darted out of the bush and grabbed onto Hiccups face. Hiccup screamed in surprise and fell on his butt. Merida instantly faced her bow towards the blue animal, but had no shot and didn't fire. Thats when she realized it wasn't any ordinary animal, it was a small dragon.

Hiccup was definitely surprised from the sudden 'attack'. The blue Terrible Terror wrapped affectionately around Hiccups shoulders and nuzzled his cheek. "Bonnlose!" Hiccup exclaimed as he pulled the dragon out in front of him. "Where've you been!?" Bonnlose burped a reply, signaling he'd gone out and foraged. "Ugh! You just ate not even a few hours ago! Dragons usually feed once a day. You on the other hand, eat over three seconds." Bonnlose licked his own eye and stared indifferently at Hiccup, who sighed in defeat. "Sometimes I think I'm crazy." A giggle caught his attention as he looked up to notice Merida laughing at him. After a snort escaped her mouth Hiccup also started laughing. Bonnlose looked over to Merida and Angus curiously, just now noticing the Scottish redhead and clysdale. He freed himself from Hiccups grasp and flew over to Angus, landing softly at his hooves.

Bonnlose looked up and sniffed at the giant horse. Angus bent his head down and smelled the tiny dragon. The horse sneezed and took a few steps back, shaking his head as he sneezed again. Bonnlose hissed at the horse and scampered towards Merida.

Merida stiffened as the dragon sniffed her feet and very suddenly climbed up on her. Hiccup watched with a grin as Bonnlose made its way up to Meridas face. Their noses were inches apart as the dragon stared deep into Meridas blue eyes. Bonnlose let out a happy chirp and wrapped around meridas shoulders before nuzzling against her neck. Merida stared wide eyed at Hiccup and silently asked him what he was doing. Hiccup had a slight look of surprise on his face which only heightened Meridas nervousness. "He only does that to me," Hiccup said surprised, "he must really like you."

Now knowing that this was a sign of affection, Merida slowly stroked

Bonnloses' scales. A soft purr escaped him as Merida began scratching his back. "Awwww. Your such a wee darling." Hiccup smiled at the pair. "His names Bonnlose, one of the messengers Berk uses. Raised him myself." Bonnlose looked up at Hiccup and gurgled at him. Merida raised an eyebrow at him. "Bonnlose?" The dragon turned it head towards her and gurgled inquisitively, wanting to know why its name was being called. Hiccup nodded his head. "He got the name from eating Toothless entire supply of fish for the day. Its norse for 'Bottomless'." At the mention of the food incident Toothless growled softly and stared at Bonnlose. The Terrible Terror flicked its tounge tauntingly at Toothless. Knowing that Toothless wouldn't dare attack him while Merida or Hiccup was holding him, well, Hiccup was the exception.

Merida laughed at the tale. "You're going to be as mischievous as the boys aren't ya?" Merida said, continuing to walk.

"Boys?" Hiccup asked inquisitively. Merida glanced back and nodded her head.

"Aye! My brothers. Triplets to be exact. Hamish, Harris and Herbert. The wee devils they are. They could get away with murder!" Merida said laughing as Hiccups face paled. Before he could ask any further questions Merida held up her hand to stop them. "This is as far as the dragons can go," Merida started, "for now." She amended, "Can't show up out of the blue with two dragons. Wait here for ten minutes then head down the path towards the castle. Tell the guard who you are and they'll take you to the throne room. I'll tell them you're coming." Merida said as she saddled Angus. Just before she galloped off Hiccup called out. "Wait! Would I see you again?"

A small blush came to her cheeks. "Aye. Sooner than you'd expect. Come on Angus." And with that Merida disappeared into the forest.

Merida galloped into the stables and hopped off of Angus. "I'll be back as soon as I can Angus. Have to get ready for our \_guest.\_" Merida smiled running off, leaving a very hungry and irritated horse. Merida rushed through the kitchen but stopped abruptly when she noticed the gigantic mess. Cooks and maids were busy cleaning up the mess and a few guards stood near. Merida approached Maudie who was sitting in a corner fanning herself. Having another one of her panic attacks. A few servants sat beside her trying to calm her down.

"Maudie?" She jumped at the sound of her name being called.

"Merida! Your ok! Thank the heavens! Your dad is worried sick about you!" Maudie said hugging Merida tightly. Merida blinked in confusion before freeing herself from the started nanny.

"What happened in here?" Merida asked looking around the destroyed kitchen. It looked like there had been a scuffle in there. Pots and plates littered the floor and a few burn marks lined the walls.

"Oh my lady! It was awful! It was a \_dragon\_. It fly straight at me and was gonna eat me! It was small like a dog or cat. I can still see its blue scales! Your dad saw it too and tried to kill it!" Meridas brain froze. '\_Blue scales? Oh god. Bonnlose. He was forging in the castles kitchen!\_' Merida wanted to laugh so bad, but held it in. She

looked around and then peeked out into the great throne room. She saw her dad talking to a few soldiers about. They were preparing to go out and find the dragon that 'attacked' Maudie.

Merida ran up to Fergus, who was now finished talking to them. He turned and smiled broadly at his daughter. "Merida! Your ok thank the gods!" He grabbed Merida and spun her around in a tight hug. Merida gasped in surprise before giggling happily at the show of affection. Fergus set his daughter back down, the seriousness returning back to him. "There was a dragon attack in the kitchen. We're heading out to find em and kill it. Stay here with mum and the boys." Fergus turned to leave, but Merida stopped him by grabbing his wrist.

"Da wait! It wasn't an attack." Fergus stopped and raised an eyebrow, curious as to what she had to say. Merida took a deep breath and told him everything that had happened in the woods. Ranging from the dragon attack to Bonnlose surprises visit, excluding the part she nearly fell and he caught her.

After the tale Fergus collapsed onto the throne. Trying to digest everything his daughter just told him. "So where is he now?"

"On the outskirts. Told him to wait there for a few. Dad, he sorta...doesn't know I'm the princess." Fergus groaned and placed his hand on his forehead in exasperation. Merida smiled and shrugged her shoulders at her dad. "Thought it would be fun to see his face at the realization I was the princess." Fergus laughed quickly.

"Well go get ready then. I'll tell your mother to be ready and to make sure the boys are ready." Merida smiled and ran off to her room. For the first time in her life, she was excited to dress up as a 'proper princess'.

Hiccup tossed a stone lazily against the floor. He sat in the shadow of Toothless, his back leaning against him. Bonnlose jumped from tree to tree, chasing some unseen prey. "How am I suppose to know how long ten minutes is? Its not like I have a sun dial on me." Hiccup said tossing a stone and looking over at Toothless. Toothless shrugged a response, either not caring or not knowing.

"Thank you for nothing Toothless. Wake me when you think we should leave."

It wasn't long until Toothless got up, instantly waking Hiccup up. Bonnlose was still playing, so it hadn't been that long. Hiccup stood, stretched and dusted himself off. "Well bud, time for me to go. You and Bonnlose stay here. Merida might have warned them I was coming, but i still want to make sure we're ok." Toothless grumbled and pressed his head against Toothless chest. "I'll be fine bud. Nothings going to happen." Hiccup said scratching Toothless head. Toothless lifted his head and gurgled towards Bonnlose. The Terrible Terror jumped down and landed on Hiccups shoulder. He didn't wrap around him, instead he remained perched on his shoulder, his tail wrapped around his arm to keep balance.

"Bonnlose? What are you doing? You can't come." Hiccup moved to grab Bonnlose, but a low growl from Toothless stopped him. Toothless gave him a look that made everything clear. If he couldn't go then Bonnlose would. "Alright, I see what's going on. Stay here till I come and get you." Hiccup said hugging Toothless head. Toothless

replayed with a lick to Toothless face. "Ugh. Thanks bud. Nothing says 'Dragon Rider' then dragon drool on your face." He said sarcastically. They parted ways and as Hiccup and Bonnlose made there way towards DunBroch castle.

It didn't take long for the pair to reach the front gate and be greeted by many gasps of shock and fear. Hiccup felt his palms grow sweaty as villagers collected behind him. All eyeing and whispering about him literally behind his back. A pair of guards ran up to Hiccup, spears raised and pointing towards him. Hiccup raised his hands up in surrender and took a step back. "Woah, woah, woah. Relax. I came to speak to the King and Queen. They requested my presence." The guards glanced towards each other. Another guard joined them from the front as two more ran up behind him. Bonnlose turned around, facing the two behind Hiccup and hissed a warning.

A large soldier with steel armor stepped forwards, a long sword held in one hand as he held a large wooden shield in the other. "Follow me. Coull!" A town guard ran forward and looked towards the large soldier. "Go inform the King and Queen of our guest." Coull nodded his head and ran off towards the keep of the castle. Hiccup watched the guard leave before turning to face the head of the guards. Once Coull was out of sight the head guards turned and began walking. A soldier behind Hiccup nudged Hiccup forward as soldiers flanked all around him. "Great...guess I'm a prisoner now." Hiccup muttered to himself as he was lead to the castle.

King Fergus and Queen Elinor sat in their respective throne chairs. Elinor's head was held high as she stared at the door in front of them. Fergus had informed her of what happened and she was waiting excitedly, though it didn't show by her calm demeanor. Next to her her three triplets sat fighting each other with wooden swords. Though a year has passed since the marriage incident and a lot has changed, some things never change. Merida wasn't present yet and Elinor felt a tug of worry on why she was late.

The massive doors opened up revealing a wall of guards. They preceded in and dispersed revealing a scrawny, yet muscular viking. Elinor and Fergus felt a twinge of disappointment when they saw Hiccup and couldn't help but feel that Berk was cheating them of help. Hiccup stepped away from the guards and towards the King and Queen. He got down on one knee, as his father had told him was 'proper', and bowed his head. "Your majesties. I am Hiccup Horrendous Haddock III of berk. I've come to your request to help rid yourself of your dragon problem."

Fergus stood and motioned for Hiccup to stand. "Uh...thank you Hiccup. The-uh-clans will most appreciate your arrival." Fergus was fidgeting at speaking. He was a natural fighter and leader, but talking was his downfall. Elinor rose and stepped in front of her husband.

"Your arrival young dragon rider is most welcomed. We shall hold a feast in your name to celebrate your arrival. Though a believe introductions are in order. I am Queen Elinor. This here is my husband King Fergus." She gestured to herself then to Fergus. "And the wee troublemakers back there are our sons. Hamish, Herbert, and Herbert." She glanced back towards the triplets who had paused in mid fight to wave at them. She looked around to the empty throne on the left. Where Merida should have been. "I don't know where our daughter



is. She should have been here."

A voice from the stairs caught their attention. "I'm right here mum. Sorry I'm late. Had to freshen up." Merida appeared at the top of the stairs wearing a blue dress with gold braiding on the edges. Her hair was freshly washed and looked like wild silk upon her head. She walked to her mom and stood next to her. Smiling broadly at Hiccup, who had a completely shocked face. "Your-your parents are the King and Queen?" Hiccup stated rather than asked. "That make you a...a...pr...prâ€|" Hiccups brain had all but stopped working at this point as he stared at Merida who was blushing lightly from his gaze. "Aye. A princess." She said brushing a stray hair from her face.

Bonnlose perked up at the sight of Merida and fly over to her, wrapping affectionately around her. Merida smiled and petted the dragon. Fergus walked up to Hiccup and patted him on the shoulder. "I just want to say thank you my boy. For saving my daughter. You will be welcomed her with open arms anyday. Now, lets get this feast going." Fergus cheered as he turned and dragged Hiccup away. Hiccup was still stunned and didn't resist. His luck was definitely unexpected.

## 6. Chapter 6

\*\*AN\*\*

\*\*Hey everybody! Sorry for the wait. Domestic issues. Short chapter here. Hope to have the next one up soon but no promises.  
\*\*

\*\*R&R!\*\*

## Chapter 6

### The Dragon Conquer

Fergus couldn't believe his luck. Out of all the strong, heroic vikings that inhabited berk, Stoick had to send him a fishbone. He wasn't even sure that this viking actual had a dragon, besides the blue one wrapped around his neck. But if Merida says he does, then he does. He simply wished that this viking would be more...well...viking like. It seems Stoick sent this boy to get killed here. In that case Stoick would use that as a reason to start another war. A small flame of rage ignited inside the kings heart. If Stoick really wanted to help he would have sent that famed dragon conquer.

'\_It is said he stands seven feet tall. Arms as big as trees. His body covered in black armor. His dragon is the mightiest of all dragons. So mighty in fact, that vikings ran away in fear from the simple sight of such a creature. The Dragon Conquer fought on top of his mighty beast against the largest and deadliest dragon vikings have ever, and likely will ever face. Tis legend that the battle shook the very earth and ignited the sky into a flurry of flames. After the battle every viking strived to ride dragons as best as he could.'

Fergus looked at Hiccup as he led him and a few guards towards the woods to retrieve his dragon. \_'Apparently even this gangly lad has

taken it upon himself to live up to him.'\_ The physical description was \_way\_ off, but thats to be expected when vikings tell a legend. Fergus didn't dwell on those thoughts, instead he began to wonder how much help, if any, this viking could be. He glanced over to his beloved daughter who was chatting animatedly with Hiccup. The young man had just told her something that had her laughing and snorting as the two walked side by side.

"So you're telling me," Merida laughed out "that you had to eat a raw fish? And why didn't you rename him when you found out he did have teeth?" Hiccup nodded his head and rubbed the back of his neck.

With a chuckle he said, "Ya. He nearly bit my hand off grabbing the fish. But something about the name stuck you know? It clicked and I simply didn't want to take that away from us." Merida nodded her head in understanding, a large smile present on her face. Seeing that the topic was over, Merida quickly changed it to keep the conversation going. She couldn't explain it, but she didn't want it to end. "So what do you do at berk?" Merida asked looking over at him. She was curious to see a look of shock and worry become present on his face before being subdued by a casual expression.

Hiccup was surprised by the question and worried about telling them who he was. Stoick had told him to keep his identity a secret for safety reasons. He remembers that conversation quite well.

**\*\*FLASHBACK\*\***

"\_Hiccup." Stoick said placing a meaty hand on the young man's shoulder. Hiccup was just finishing packing when the large man stopped him. "Ya dad?" Hiccup asked standing up and turning to face his father. A look of concern was on Stoicks face as he stared at his son. "Hiccup. I'm not sure how the Scots are going to treat ya. We could only hope that they don't throw you in a dungeon when they spot ya. It's likely they'll know exactly who you are. Then again, it's likely they'll have no idea your my son and the dragon conquer. If thats the case son. Don't tell them who you are. Name and occupation as a blacksmith. Thats it. Nothing about you running the academy or killing the Red Death. Hel, I'd even make you ride a different dragon if it didn't make me feel better knowing you had Toothless." Hiccup stared wide eyed at his dad before an exception slipped into his thoughts. \_

"\_What if they are friendly dad? What if they don't mean me any harm? Could I tell them then?"\_

\_Stoick shook his head no. "If they don't know who you are theres no need to let them know. Its for you own good son." Hiccup nodded his head in understanding. He didn't mind not telling them. Heck, he'd prefer to get out of the spotlight for once.\_

**\*\*END OF FLASHBACK\*\***

Hiccup wasn't one to be the certain of attention. Thirteen years of shunning does that to a person. At berk and the surrounding tribes he was expected to be the "Dragon Conquer" and any problem that arises with the dragons was to be blamed on him. He was put on a level that sets him in the spotlight and there was no way out. There was hardly anyway for him to simply be...wellâ€|Hiccup. The shy, stuttering

screw up that makes mistakes and was entrusted with a dragon riding academy. He couldn't tell her, or any other person here, that he was the Dragon Conquer. Remembering what his dad told him to say, Hiccup spoke. "I'm a blacksmith. And when I'm not doing that I'm helping others with their dragon problems."

Merida was even more curious at this point. Why would they send him out by himself? She saw that he could obviously hold his own in a dragon fight, but surely there had to be some reason as to him being out here. She had the building suspicion he was lying to her. Before Merida could call him out on his lie though, Fergus spoke up. "A blacksmith eh? We could use one. Ours got injured after the latest raid and we could use a blacksmith. Mind giving us a hand?"

Merida and Hiccup looked back at Fergus who had now come to stand directly behind the pair. Hiccup shrugged his shoulders. "I guess so. What would you need me to do?" Hiccup was proficient in basically all aspects of smithing, but they didn't need to know that. One less thing they could use against him. Fergus perked up at the thought of having his forge back up and running. \_'maybe this lad could be useful yet' Fergus thought smiling. "We mostly need repairs on weapons. Them dragons sure take a toll on them. Thought we truly haven't been able to use them with the whole 'can't see them to fight them' issue." Hiccup nodded his head in understanding. Dragons took a huge toll out on weapons just by using fire and from what Hiccup just witnessed, they were going to take an even larger toll up close.

"Alright. I'll get to work as soon as we get back." A sharp snap stopped the group in their tracks. The guards around Fergus moved their hands to their swords, preparing for an ambush. Hiccup glanced around, looking for any sign of what made the noise. A soft smile came to his face when he noticed a pair of green eyes staring down at him from atop a tree. Merida followed his gaze and smiled at the black dragon. "It's alright. It's just his dragon." Merida said pointing towards the large animal. Fergus eyes widened as the large reptile slowly slide down the tree and sat behind Hiccup.

Toothless eyes narrowed at the unfamiliar people and a low growl escaped his mouth when the guards tightened their grip on their swords. "I wouldn't do that if I were you. He doesn't take too kindly to weapons." Hiccup said patting the top of Toothless head. Merida stood opposite of Hiccup and scratched Toothless head. The dragon purred softly at the attention and shifted focus from the guards to the large man standing in front of them.

Fergus was amazed at the beauty and strength of the dragon in front of him. Various scars covered the Night Furies body. Each one having their own unique tale. Fergus looked at Hiccup. A few scars on his face told corresponding stories. Fergus glanced at Toothless prosthetic tail then to Hiccups metal leg. By the looks of it, the fit perfectly together. A broad smile came to Fergus face. By the looks of it, Hiccup and his dragon had seen lots of action. Maybe this fishbone could truly help them.

"I expect you'll fly him back to the castle?" Fergus found himself asking. He wanted to see the pair in action. It wasn't everyday you see a human riding a dragon. Well, not in Scotland at least. Hiccup smiled and nodded his head yes. "I suppose so. It's about time for our afternoon flight. You should head back first though. Don't want to

arrive without a heads up. Plus I need to scout the land out. Figure out where their nest is. I'll meet you back at the castle at dusk?" Hiccup asked already getting his bags together.

Fergus nodded his head. "Good idea. Should have brought along a map to show you everything." Fergus said. Merida brightened up at that.

"I could do that! I know the land better than any map." She looked hopefully at Hiccup, waiting for his approval first. Hiccup blinked in surprise and looked to Toothless for approval first. He was the one that was going to be carrying them. Toothless huffed a reply and Hiccup shrugged his shoulders. "As long as its ok with the King." Merida squealed happily before turning to face her dad. Fergus avoided eye contact and stared at his feet. "Uh. Merida. I...uh...think that won't be the...uhâ€¦.best of ideas. We still don't no him, no offense Hiccup."

"None taken."

"And what would your mother say?" Fergus continued glancing up at his daughter. Bad move. Her big blue eyes were tearing up and she was sniffing slightly. Her pupils were wide giving her dad the puppy dog face.

"She'd say riding dragons was no place for a princess." Merida said sadly. "But how often would I get to ride a dragon da? I would be the first Scot in history to do so! Pllllleeeaaasssee?" Merida begged. Her eyes were watering more and tears threatened to escape. Fergus did his best to avoid the pitiful look on his daughters face. He was a sucker for the puppy dog eyes and she knew it. "Please da? Pretty please?"

Fergus sighed in defeat. "Got your bow?" Merida nodded her head quickly yes. Hope swelling in her chest. Fergus sighed heavily again. Knowing full well he was going to be in trouble with his wife. "Fiiine." Merida squealed very loudly and hugged her dad. "Oh thank you, thank you, thank you." She released him as quick as she hugged him and ran up to Hiccup. "Lets go!" She yelled happily ushering Hiccup to move faster. As if her father was going to change his mind at the last minute and by the look on his face, he would.

Hiccup jumped onto the saddle and hooked himself in. He reached down and assisted Merida in climbing up. Using a leftover piece of rope he tied her to the saddle. "Hold on tight now. Toothless like to show off." Hiccup said, already knowing that asking any less of the dragon was like asking Hiccup to win in arm wrestling against Stoic.

Merida wrapped her arms around Hiccup. A small shiver ran up his spine as Merida pressed herself firmly against him. "Ready?" Hiccup asked as Merida pressed her chin onto his shoulder. "Ready."

Hiccup smiled and patted Toothless on the neck. "Alright bud. Easy does it." Toothless rolled his eyes and spread his wings. Before Fergus could offer any protest, the trio were off in the air soaring high above. A joyous Merida screaming all the way.

**\*\*A/N\*\***

**\*\*Chapter 7 is up! Hope you all enjoy. This chapter is inspired by the trailer for HTTYD 2 and thought it would be interesting to write this. Just wanted to say that Sept. and Oct. are very busy around here and i can't really find time to write. Hope you enjoy this and please review so I could see how this story is doing.\*\***

**\*\*R&R!\*\***

## Chapter 7

### Free Fall

"YOU DID WHAT?" Elinor yelled standing up and dropping the book she was reading. The servants nearby stopped what they were doing and stared wide eyed at their Queen. It was rare, very, very, very rare to see Elinor raise her voice AND lose her composure. Queen Elinor was renowned for her cool head in the face of any obstacle. Heck, she walked right through a brawl between the clans and grabbed all the lords and her husband by the ears and led them out without giving anyone a single glance.

"I...uh...sorta...uh...well...let merida go off with the dragon riderâ€" Fergus said, mumbling his words towards the end. He hoped that his wife didn't hear him, but unfortunately she did. "HOW COULD YOU FERGUS?! DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHAT COULD HAPPEN TO HER? WE DON'T \_KNOW\_ THIS PERSON! HE COULD KIDNAP HER! OR HE COULDâ€" Her voice grew quiet as small tears began to form under her eyes. Fergus immediately stood in front of Elinor and enveloped her in a hug.

Fergus hushed her soothingly and rubbed her back. "She's fine Elinor. Merida isn't going to let anything happen to her. Plus, I don't think Hiccup would do anything to harm her. Him and his dragon fought off the dragon to protect her. They could have kidnapped her then, but they didn't. I trust em Elinor. You should too." Elinor straightened up, the tears never escaping and gone from her eyes.

"You're right Fergus. I'm sure they'll be fine."

**\*\*WITH MERIDA & HICCUP\*\***

"This is amazing Hiccup!" Merida screamed as Toothless rolled and shot upwards again. Hiccup attempted to slow down the Night Fury, but seeing that Merida was enjoying herself, instead they decided to pick things up. "You haven't seen anything yet Merida!" Hiccup yelled above the roar of the wind. He leaned into Toothless and whispered into his ear. The Night Fury gurgled a happy reply and leveled out.

"So Merida, you know Toothless can't fly without me right?" Hiccup said casually glancing back at Merida. Merida raised an eyebrow at his tone. living with three troublesome brothers made it easy to detect when someone was planning something. Merida had known that Toothless lost a tailfin and in order to fly he would need someone to control it. She hesitantly nodded her head yes, unsure of how this was going to play out. Hiccups smiled broadly, though his helmet hid it, and began shifting positions of the tail fin. After a series of

\_clicks\_ he pulled a lever and locked the pedal. He unclipped himself from toothless and spun around, now facing merida fully. "Ok now listen up. What ever you do, don't let go of Toothless. Ok?" Hiccup said, ensuring that Merida was secured to the saddle of Toothless.

"Hiccup? W-what are you doing?" Merida asked, eyes going wide as she noticed Hiccup was no longer flying Toothless. Hiccup tugged on the rope to triple check she wouldn't fall off. "You trust me?" He said staring at her. Their eyes locked and Merida knew they were full of good intention. She nodded her head yes without a second thought. "Good." And with that Hiccup rolled off the side. Merida screamed and looked over to see Hiccup free falling towards the ground. Toothless stared at Hiccup then looked over at Merida. He gestured with his head to hold on. She quickly complied and before she could say anything the dragon barrel rolled into a steep dive and was soon diving next to hiccup. Merida glanced over at Hiccup who was staring right back at her and waved. "HICCUP! GET BACK ON HERE!" Merida screamed, fearing that the young man would plummet to the earth and die. The ground become visible through the clouds as the trio lost more and more altitude.

Hiccup rolled his eyes and pulled a string on his leg. Hiccup spread his arms as a piece of leather unrolled that attached his arms and legs in a 'flying squirrel' fashion. Hiccup quickly stopped falling and zoomed up past Toothless and Merida who were still in a dive. Meridas eyes bulged out in surprise as she snapped her head back to stare at Hiccup. Toothless opened his wings up and forcibly slowed their dissent. In a few short seconds the pair were flying side by side.

Merida stared wide eyed at Hiccup as he pulled a string that deployed a fin on his back. Hiccup tucked his right arm in forcing him to roll twice before opening his arm again to stop the roll. Toothless mimicked the move and Merida couldn't help but notice the strong bond between the two. Merida felt the magic in the air as Hiccup and Toothless mimicked each others moves in perfect sync. "This is amazing!" Merida shouted, even more awed then she was a few short minutes ago.

"I know!" Hiccup shouted excitedly as both he and Toothless rolled again. Merida couldn't stop herself from giggling as she lost her self in the thrill of the ride.

The ground was still approaching them due to the fact Hiccup was gliding and not truly flying. Toothless dived down again and now flew below Hiccup. In a move that must have taken thousands of attempts, Toothless opened up his wings as Hiccup positioned himself to plop down onto the saddle. Hiccup was no sitting down in the saddle and hooking himself back in as he regained control over Toothless. Merida was left speechless by the move, at first she was expecting Hiccup to land on top of her or for her to impede him in some fashion. Yet he barely touched her when he landed on the saddle. There wasn't much room on it to begin with so this was truly remarkable for the pair to be so in sync with the other.

Hiccup unlatched the lock on Toothless pedal and shifted positions bringing the trio in a vertical climb. Leveling out, Hiccup removed his helmet to allow the cool wind to dry any sweat that accumulated on his forehead. He turned and smiled broadly at Merida who had a

large smile on her face. "That was amazing Hiccup. Thank you so much." She leaned in and gave him a quick peck on the cheek to show her appreciation, though others could argue this. Hiccup turned a light pink and faced away quickly to head his growing blush. "Uh...you're...uh..w-welcome." He stuttered as he fumbled to put his helmet back on.

Merida smiled and giggled lightly at the teen. Regaining his composure, Hiccup leaned forward. "Alright bud, lets head back." Toothless gurgled in approval before zooming off. Merida's hair was blown back as they rocketed past trees and hills. Zooming above Dunbroch, Hiccup circled twice before spotting a large clearing that would be perfect to land. The citizens of Dunbroch stared wide eyed as they saw the large black dragon zoomed by. The trademark whistling of a Night Fury had startled a few peasants and guards. Thankfully the guards had been pre warned and no one shot at them, they their were a few guards with twitchy fingers that had to be reassured they weren't under attack.

Landing softly, Hiccup unhooked himself and hopped off before turning and helping Merida out of the saddle. She happily accepted the assistance, but scolded him when he picked her up to get her down. A few guards appeared as they went to check on the new visitor and their princess.

**\*\*WITH QUEEN ELINOR AND KING FERGUS\*\***

A low whistling noise drew the pairs attention from the planning for the feast. "What on earth?" Fergus said standing up and approaching the halls doors. A guard ran in and quickly bowed before the king. "Your highness! The black dragon you spoke of is hovering above us! They went to the fairgrounds to land." Before Fergus could reply Elinor was at his side and walking past him. "Lets go great them shall we?" She said glancing back at Fergus. Her eyes told him it wasn't a suggestion.

"O-of course! What a grand idea!" Fergus quickly caught up to her and together the pair left to great their daughter and the soon to be savior of their country.

## 8. Chapter 8

**\*\*A/N\*\***

**\*\*Chapter 8 up and running! Glad you all are enjoying the story so far. Hoping to push it along with the character development here. Can't wait for the feedback. Until next time.\_**

**><em>\*\***

**\*\*R&R!\*\***

## Chapter 8

### New Wardrobe

Hiccup stared in awe at the room in front of him. Queen Elinor had generously provided a lavish room for him and Toothless to reside in as long as they needed to. Hiccup placed a hand on the bed inspecting

the mattress. He had a mattress. A \_mattress.\_ Being the son of the chief of the most powerful viking tribes of the North Sea allowed Hiccup to enjoy certain...\_luxuries\_...that other vikings couldn't dream of. That wasn't saying much though, as Hiccup still slept on wood for a bed. The only comfort would be furs he placed under him, which was never because that would result in freezing to death. Uncomfortable bed or frostbitten toes? The choice was pretty obvious. Hiccup rolled his eyes and the thought and stared down at his prosthetic foot. Frost bites the last thing he wants.

His fingers gently stroked the soft silk fabrics that made up the bottom covers. \_Silk.\_ Another luxury the viking was denied. Silk wasn't warm enough nor durable enough to last the brutal Berk winters, which took well over half the year. Silk wasn't practical, but that didn't mean it didn't feel nice. And boy did it feel nice. Hiccup had never touched something that felt so soft beneath his callused fingers. He wondered how it would feel if he simply laid down on it, \_slept\_ on it. The idea was halted when he looked his attire. Dirt stained his clothes and mud stuck in chunks to his boots. His hair was matted down from sweat and dirt and a few twigs clutched to his body. He dared not dirty that bed. He feared that he shouldn't even have the privilege of sleeping on something so exquisite.

His palm pressed down onto the bed and he felt the bed mold around his hand. It felt sooo soft and Hiccup couldn't believe how tired he actual was at that moment. Toothless had been given a giant "doggie mat" that involved furs that were extremely soft. 'No wonder Vikings raid this land so often. Its not like they can go without this stuff.' Hiccup thought as Toothless curled up on the furs and was instantly asleep.

A knock on the door grabbed his attention as a maid poked her head in. "Excuse me sir, but Queen Elinor requested me to bring ya a bath." The maid spoke politely. Hiccup flushed lightly, even the Queen had decided that Hiccup needed a bath.

"Oh. Well thank you. I was hoping to wash up before anything else." The maid smiled lightly and walked in, with three other maids behind her. They deposited the washtub and filled it with warm water. Once they finished their tasks they left, leaving Hiccup and the original maid behind. Hiccup began unfastening his straps and setting them down around him, he stopped short of removing his leg when he noticed the maid still standing there.

She smiled softly at him once again as he looked up at her. He flushed and rubbed the back of his head. "Uhh...I can't really...uh...you know...with...you...uh...in here." Hiccup stuttered, obviously embarrassed by the intense stare of the maid. The maids eyes widen in surprise at this statement. "Oh! Of course! My apologies. Its our custom to bathe our guests. I should have informed you sir." Hiccups light pink complexion turned a sun burnt red at the statement. "T-that w-won't be n-necessary." Hiccup said avoiding eye contact. Her face fell and she looked down at her feet. "I could get someone else if i do not...please you." She said sadly. Hiccups eyes bulged as he stared gaping at her. His brain was trying to put together a solid statement, but his mouth wouldn't listen and took off on its own accord. "I-its not that! I bet you'd please me all day!" The maids face flushed at the statement.



It took Hiccups brain half a second to register what he just said before his face contorted in horror. "I-I-I didn't mean it like that! Wha-what I-I-I meant was-was that I-uh-I-think it would be...appropriate for me to bathe myself." Hiccup said his brain finally managing to gain control. The smile returned to the maids face as she nodded her head. "As you wish, but I need your clothes." Hiccup clutched shirt and pants protectively. "Why?" He asked suspiciously.

"They need cleaned don't they? I'll bring you fresh clothes so don't worry about that." Hiccups suspes gaze didn't falter and he remained motionless. She sighed and folded her arms in an unladylike fashion. "Look. The princess has taken a liking to you and if you wanna see her AT ALL, you'll take off your clothes." Hiccups eyes widened to the size of dinner plates. That escalated quickly.

Seeing him still not budge the maid sighed. "Alright. I'll go out until you change then I'll come back and get the clothes. Got it?" Hiccup slowly nodded his head in agreement. The maid smiled and walked out the door. Toothless was staring intently at the maid, having woken up from the commotion. He looked over at Hiccup with a stoic expression. Hiccup glared at the dragon, who in turn made an awkward smile. "Oh whatever. No close your eyes too. And no peeking!" The Night Fury covered his eyes with his paws. After a few seconds he playfully peeked and was meet with a thrown pillow.

"I saw something that day, something I'll not forget. It stands twelve feet tall, with razor sharp claws. Its hide littered with the weapons of fallen warriors. Its face scarred with one dead eye." Fergus told, his hand pointing towards his eye. Hamish, Harris, and Hubert were dying of boredom from the tale. If something exciting didn't happen they were going to go mad. Merida was already sitting at the table so any hope of her surprisingly interjecting into the story was gone. Their only hope was- "Hiccup!" Merida yelled joyfully as the young lad came walking down the steps from a fresh bath. He looked very uncomfortable and Merida instantly knew why. Instead of his usual outfit he was left to wear a kilt that wrapped around his waist and around one of his shoulders, leaving his chest and legs bare.

The self-conscious viking was doing his best to ensure the kilt covered as much of his body as possible and was tugging it all around. Merida stopped in front of him, her hand covering her mouth as she suppressed a giggle. "If you keep tugging it'll fall right off." Merida warned. Her attempts to not laugh vanished as Hiccup instantly stopped fidgeting and moved his hands away from the kilt. Acting as if touching it could lead to the kilt falling off. Merida grabbed his hand and pulled him towards the dinner table.

Everyone present at the table smiled warmly as Hiccup sat down beside Merida. Merida quickly went to work fixing a plate for Hiccup and herself. "Try the haggis Hiccup." Merida said plopping a large sheeps stomach down in front of him. Hiccup looked up to see the worried expressions of Hamish, Harris, and Hubert as they all shook their head no when he poked it. "What is it?" He asked looking from them to Merida.

"Sheeps stomach." She said simply and took a bite out of turkey leg. Hiccup shrugged his shoulders and took a small chunk of haggis. They triplets eyes widened in horror as Hiccup bit down on it, chewed, and

swallowed. Merida was taking a sip of mead when Hiccup swallowed. "So how was it?" Elinor asked glancing up from a stack of paper.

Hiccup smiled and took another bit and swallowed. "Really good. Alot better then regurgitated fish." In surprise, Merida sputtered out the mead she hadn't swallowed yet, spraying her brothers with the fermented liquid. Merida laughed and snorted as she rolled off her chair in complete ecstasy of the "joke" Hiccup just told. After a moment of silence from the triplets, they too burst into laughter. Elinor gave Hiccup and her kids a scolding look but didn't say anything else. Fergus on the other hand banged on the table and let out a hearty laugh. Hiccup rubbed the back of his neck and smiled awkwardly. He learned that day he could get used to this.

## 9. Chapter 9

**\*\*A/N\*\***

**\*\*Thank you all so much for the reviews last chapter! I hate the late updates, but I have no time at all to write. I took some time editing this chapter, but I'm no English major (I'll leave that to you Ramofana). English has never been my strong side and I simply write for the fun of writing. Weird right? I'll try my hardest to implement your suggestions Ramofana, but I can't help it if something slip past. ANYWAYS. On with the story!**  
><strong>

**\*\*R&R!\*\***

## Chapter 9

### Gronckle Iron

Three days. Three days of constant patrols and Hiccup had nothing to show for it. He hasn't encountered a single dragon since his first day here. Not that he minded, but he was here to do a job, not to fly around and enjoy the scenery. Dragons were usually never this evasive, but Hiccup couldn't find a single trace of them. The only mark he found of them was the area they had fought in, but that only led him so far. The trail had gone cold and it didn't seem like warming up anytime soon. If he hadn't of personally encountered them he would have could the Scots liars about the dragon raids. Though that would probably spark another war.

Hiccup sighed and poured molten iron in a mold. Letting it cool, he popped open another mold that had already cooled. A shiny arrowhead fell out. Picking it up, Hiccup walked over to a spinning wheel and began sharpening the small arrow. He decided today would be a good day to work in the Smithy. A storm was approaching and it was a cardinal rule not to fly in storms. A boom of thunder rattled the small smithy. "OUCH!" Hiccup yelped. A small drip of blood pooled at the end of his index finger. Ignoring the blood, Hiccup brought the sharpened arrow head to his eyes and examined it carefully. Smiling proudly at his work he walked over to a stack of wooden poles with feathers on the end. Arrow shafts. Picking one, Hiccup attached the arrowhead and secured it tightly. He placed the freshly made arrow in a quiver filled with 20 or so other arrows. "She's going to love these." Hiccup said pulling one out and simply admiring it.

"Love what?" Hiccup yelped and dropped the arrow. Spinning swiftly he kicked the arrow under the table and away from view.

"Hi Merida! Fancy to see you here! Wh-what do I owe to this grand visit your highness?" Merida's eyes narrowed at the use of the title. She folded her arms and approached Hiccup slowly, deliberately staring him down. Hiccup fidgeted nervously as she approached him. He quickly repositioned himself so he covered the arrows from her view. "Whatcha hiding Hiccup?" Merida asked casually staring directly into his eyes. She learned this form of intimidation worked best.

"Hiding? Who said anything about hiding something?" Hiccup looked around the room. If he even glanced at her he knew he would fold, and she knew it too.

"Sooo, why are you avoiding looking at me?"

"I am not." Hiccup stated defensively, whistling quietly as he stared up at the ceiling. "Just not familiar with my surroundings yet." She cocked her hip and placed a hand on it. She gave him a look that clearly read 'seriously'. Hiccup glanced at Merida, bad move. He was instantly trapped in her mesmerizing gaze and froze. The corner of Merida's twitched upward, she knew she won. Hiccup held her gaze for a few valiant seconds before folding. With a heavy sigh, Hiccup pulled out the quiver of arrows behind his back. "I was going to surprise you with them!" He said disappointedly. Merida stared wide eyed at the quiver and pulled one of the arrows out and examined it carefully. It was made of a metal she had never seen before. Touching it, she realized they were very light yet extremely sharp and unmalleable. "What kind of metal is this?" She asked inquisitively.

"It's called 'Gronkle Iron'. Same material my shield is made out of." She glanced towards the shield as it rested in the corner of the smith. It was in fact made of the same material.

"I asked for some after the encounter with the dragon. Still need to decide a name by the way. Anyways, it's the strongest material known on Berk. My sword and your arrows couldn't even nick its skin last time. With these," At this Hiccup pulled out a medium sized sword with a strange word carved into it in Norse. Having studied some Norse, Merida picked out the word 'Endeavor' from the runes. "We'll be able to wound it enough for capture." Merida stared at the blade and then at the arrows. A wide smile spreading across her face. "This is amazing Hiccup! Thank you so much!"

She jumped up and latched onto Hiccup, wrapping her arms tightly around him. Hiccup carefully hugged her back, making sure the sharp blade and arrow didn't stab anyone. "Ah it was nothing. Got a few more to make though." Merida quickly let go, still smiling broadly. The pair had been nearly inseparable the past few days. Only Hiccup's daily patrols and Merida's princely duties separated them. Though neither has made any move to say anything. As far as the other knew they were simply being friendly towards one another. Hiccup turned around and returned the sword to its spot, still awaiting a good sharpening. He then walked over to the mold from earlier and removed the cooled arrowhead.

Spotting the shield, Merida picked it up and examined the large red

dragon on the front. She judged its weight and was surprised at how light it really was. She turned it around and slipped her hand into the arm strap. Meridas finger brushed against a small lever and her curiosity grew. "Hey Hiccup. What does this lever do?" Hiccup turned and faced her.

"What lever?"

**\*\*WHAP!\*\***

A large rope sprang from the shield and wrapped tightly around Hiccup. Merida yelped as the shield dragged her forward toward Hiccup. Hiccups' eyes widen in surprise and he stared into Meridas' deep blue eyes. Their noses' practically touching in this position. Meridas face was burned red as she stared up at Hiccup. "Uh...how do Iâ€¦" Merida stuttered, flustered at the compromising position.

"Second switch from the one you pulled." Hiccup stated matter of factly, trying and failing to look anywhere but her. Merida complied and the ropes fell to the floor around their feet.

They both backed up from each other as soon as they were freed. Hiccup rubbed his neck as Merida rubbed her arms, both nervous as could be. "Soâ€¦what did you come in here for?" Hiccup asked casually. Merida snapped out of her trance and looked up at Hiccup. "Well I was wondering if you'd want to go practice your sword fighting. Its been awhile since I've had a good challenge. My da tries but I've trained with him so long its an even match."

Hiccup smiled and nodded his head. "That sounds like fun. But its going to rain though" Merida rolled her eyes.

"That's what will make it so fun!"

A pair of red eyes followed the pair as they ran off towards the training fields. One of its eyes blinded by three claw marks.

Merida stopped pulling once they reached a small clearing behind the castle. King Fergus stood there waving his wooden sword at an invisible opponent. Noticing the pair he stopped mid strike and smiled. "Good evening Hiccup."

"Good evening your majesty." His eyes glanced downwards and he raised an eyebrow, noticing their interlocked fingers. Hiccup glanced downwards also and swiftly withdrew his hand. Merida lightly blushed and grabbed two wooden swords, tossing one to Hiccup and keeping the other. "Alright Haddock, show my dad what ye got." She stepped away, clearing the way for Fergus and Hiccup to spar. Before Hiccup could protest Fergus took a step forward and swung at him. Reacting on instinct, Hiccup parried the blow with a spin, dissipating the blow.

Hiccup blocked another blow before launching his own attack. Fergus had to give the lad credit, he was good. But was he good enough to beat him? Merida watched the sight with fascinated eyes. Each attack Hiccup made was precise and well timed. He never attacked when or where Fergus expected and was constantly spinning around the giant man. Fergus was spinning in circles as Hiccup weaved side to side in an attempt to get behind Fergus. Years of dragon training with

Nadders has taught Hiccup that once you entered an opponents blind spot, they rarely recovered. Thats precisely what he was doing.

Hiccup could see the beads of sweat collecting on Fergus's brow. He was getting tired, they could all tell. With Hiccups stamina he could prolong the fight indefinitely. A boom of thunder echoed across the field as rain slowly began to cascade down. Merida glanced up as rain drops fell down upon the pair. Hiccup dashed forwards and made quick slashes at Fergus, who took a few steps Fergus moved to retaliate for the quick offensive, Hiccup slammed his elbow into Fergus exposed wrist. The wooden blade fell from Fergus hand and Hiccups blade rested under Fergus chin. Exhaling heavily, Hiccup withdrew the blade and smiled. "You're very good your majesty. I'm sure if these was real I would have been outmatched." Fergus laughed and patted him on the back.

"Great show boy! We'll have to drink to this! The only other person that could best me is Merida! And that was only after 12 years of sword practice!" Fergus boomed, wrapping a broad arm around Hiccup and leading him back towards the castle.

"Hey! I still have a duel with him!" Merida shouted as she ran up and stood in front of the pair. A boom of thunder echoed across the field and the King glanced upwards. "Not now sweetie. Don't want to get hit by lightning." Hiccup glanced upwards and shuddered. An old memory arising.

"Ya. Not the funniest of things to experience." Fergus looked over at him confused. "Cardinal rule not to fly in thunderstorms. Learned that the hard way."

"You've been hit by lightning?" Fergus and Merida asked, both looking doubtful.

Hiccup nodded his head. "Big hazard when it comes to flying. Specially with a piece of metal attached to your leg and your dragons tail." Hiccup said, lifting up his prosthetic foot slightly. Fergus glanced down and nodded his head in understanding. Merida crossed her arms and pouted slightly. "You will owe me a duel then." She said, waving a finger in front of his face. Hiccup smiled and nodded his head.

"And I look forward to it your grace." Merida hid a smirk while they returned to the castle.

The day had progressed rather uneventfully. With their patrol schedule disrupted, Hiccup and Toothless were forced to endure the...inquisitive nature of Queen Elinor. Hiccup had rarely spoken to the Queen and realized that she was very, very perceptive and no unknown questions would remain unknown. "So what do you do at Berk?" The queen asked, taking a small bite of meat as the entire royal family and Hiccup sat down for dinner.

"I'm a blacksmith." Hiccup responded, after swallowing a piece of haggis. To which the triplets gagged and Harris past out.

"Why would Stoick send a blacksmith to a formerly hostile land?" Elinor asked, habitually wiping away any food carefully with a napkin, though there could hardly be a crumb on her mouth.

"The other ambassadors are busy and I volunteered." Hiccup shrugged. It was true, nearly all of Berks dragon riders were off on diplomatic missions to other tribes. It was just by sheer luck that Hiccup managed to take on this mission. The latest topic seemed to be the recent sighting of Roman ships in Viking territory.

"What do your parents think?"

"My dad actually liked the idea. Good for the family."

"And your mother?" Hiccups face fell, a question he knew would eventually pop up.

"Died when I was little." Merida and Elinor exchanged sympathetic glances.

"We're sorry to hear that."

"Occupational hazard." Hiccup said softly, like the term had been engraved into his soul. Hoping to brighten the mood, Fergus spoke.

"How about your foot?"

"Fergus!" Elinor hissed as her husband sunk back down.

"Now is not the time for that."

"It's ok your majesty. I'm used to it." Fergus perked up, he loved a good story.

"I can't tell you all the whole story, not yet. What I \_can \_tell you though, is that I lost it in a fight with a dragon."

A loud crash and scream interrupted Hiccup as Maudie came running out of the kitchen. A blue dragon chased her and hopped up onto her shoulder. A turkey leg hung from its mouth as the dragon jumped off onto Hamish head. It hopped onto Harris head next then Huberts' before landing on Hiccups head and wrapping protectively around him. "Bonnlose! Hey bud!" Hiccup said, unwrapping the dragon and scratching him affectionately below the chin. The Terrible Terror purred and cooed as Hiccup used his free hand to unlatch the letters the dragon was carrying.

Toothless, who had been laying lazily next to the hearth the majority of the day, was now sitting next to Hiccup and glaring disapprovingly at the small Terror. Hiccup stopped scratching Bonnlose as he began to read the updates from Berk. It wasn't good. Two messenger Terrors have gone missing. Both of which were communicating with riders in clans near the last known location of the Roman ships. Hiccups face fell further as he noticed that two more Terrible Terrors were dispatched and haven't returned.

Relations with the Lava Louts have been deteriorating steadily and it seems like another war would be inevitable. Typical. It had been less than a month since their last vendetta against each other. The only good news was that the Bog-Burglars have requested a dragon academy on their island. He knew that would happen eventually, Camicazi and Big-Boobied Bertha and taken a liking to the dragons and had insisted

on being taught to fly them. If he didn't teach them soon they'll take matters into their own hands. Which would probably result in a few injuries, both dragon and human.

"What's wrong Hic'?" Merida asked, having been examining the variety of expressions Hiccup was exhibiting. With so many facial expressions in one letter, she knew most of it wasn't good. Hiccups head snapped upwards, momentarily forgetting they were there. "What was that?" Hiccup asked, having completely missed the question.

"What does the letter say?" Merida asked, slowly standing and beginning to walk towards him.

"Oh! Uh, just news on what's going on. A few problems that need to be worked out, but...uh...nothing major." Hiccup lied. Truth was this was a pretty serious matter and if it continued he would be recalled back to Berk.

Merida folded her arms and glared at Hiccup. Great. Round 2 here we go. Fergus scooted back slightly and Elinor glanced between Hiccup and Merida. "Why are you lying Hiccup?"

"Uh. Who said anything about lying?" Hiccup asked, staring down at his food and quickly shoving his mouth full. By this point Toothless and Bonnlose had returned to the Hearth and Hiccup was left at the mercy of Merida.

"Hiccup!" She took a slow walk around the table toward him. Hamish, Harris and Hubert glanced between the pair as they watched the events unfold. A loud roar interrupted her stride as the halls' doors flung open. A guard ran in, panting and fear-stricken. "DRAGON ATTACK!" Fergus and Hiccup immediately stood. Sharing a glance, Hiccup spoke first. "Your highness. Light the signals and get your archers to the walls. I'll take to the air and try to down one of them." Fergus nodded his head in agreement. He would have argued against someone ordering him, the \_King,\_ around, but now was not the time for that.

Hiccup ran towards Toothless, who was waiting impatiently at the door. With one swift motion, Hiccup clicked his foot in and secured his harness. "Hiccup wait!" Hiccup turned his head to see Merida running towards him. His shield and sword in hand with her bow and quiver strapped to her back and hip. She quickly handed him his weapons, which hiccup strapped to his back and side. Merida motioned to climb on, but was stopped by Hiccup. "No Merida. It's too dangerous. I haven't had enough experience fighting these dragons."

Merida placed her fists on her hips and glared daggers at him. "I'm going Hiccup."

"Uh...not the best of ideas Mer."

"I have arrows that could hurt them. I'm the best archer here and my usefulness will triple if I'm in the air." She said mounting Toothless, despite the protests from Hiccup and her mother.

"Merida! Get off that dragon now!" Elinor stated forcefully. Fergus remained quiet, knowing full well that when Merida put her mind to something it seldom changed.

"I can help mom! I really can!"

An explosion and screams muffled Elinor's reply. Sighing in resignation, Elinor spoke again. "Be careful." Merida smiled proudly and wrapped an arm around Hiccup.

"Always am."

"I swear nothing will happen to her your highness." Hiccup stated, placing a hand over his heart. A pledge on his life. Elinor nodded her head and prayed softly as Toothless bolted out the door towards the ongoing dragon raid.

**\*\*So, who's ready for the next chapter?\*\***

## 10. Chapter 10

**\*\*A/N\*\***

**\*\*Glad so many of you are ready for this chapter! Every review influences this story in some way. Specially since chapters are written after I see reviews from previous chapters. I'm not used to people seeing my work and I'm \_constantly\_ changing and expanding my writing style. \*\***

**\*\* T-Biggz: I agree Hiccup needs to stand up for himself. But I think Merida simply has that affect on people. She's not really a person you could say no to right? And I try to do at least \_some\_ research when writing this. Just discovered the other day a map of the Barbarian archipelago of the HTTYD world. Awesome right? And the dragon is influenced from other dragons in the world and some simple "i wonder if it had..." ideas.**  
**><strong>**

**\*\* shimmer-snowflake: Thanks for all the love! I'm glad your really enjoying the story so far. I hope latter chapters will be able to have the same effect.\*\***

**\*\* I'mafruitlooptoo: Hope you'll be ready for the next one too!\*\***

**\*\* Comet Moon: Glad to be posting. Itching to get more chapters out faster, but simply don't have the time at the moment.\*\***

**\*\* FalconFate: Love your view on the Romans. Lets see if we can keep an eye on them shall we? -insert foreshadow here-\*\***

**\*\*Whelp\*\*\*\*! R&R!\*\***

## Chapter 10

### Raid

Merida prayed quietly as Toothless ran out into the castle's courtyard. Explosions rattled the castle walls and bowmen attempted to get to their posts. "Light the signals! Get the lights up in the air!" Fergus boomed, having been running right behind the pair. A few soldiers took the torches they were holding and through them into giant bowls of firewood. Igniting, the bowls lifted up into the air



and illuminated the night sky. Hiccup cursed silently as he saw at least a dozen dragons circling the castle, occasionally dive bombing down for an attack or to snatch a helpless sheep or cow.

The good news was that he recognized all these dragons. A few Deadly Nadders, a Nightmare, three Gronckles, and a zippleback. "Wow. I've never seen so many dragons..." Merida whispered. Hiccup paid little attention as he scanned the skies. It was all wrong. Dragons were never this organized during a raid. Usually they were fighting and bickering with each other, while clumsily trying to get food. They never timed their attacks from each other, ensuring that the defenders were never where they attacked. The only time he's seen a synchronized raid at this scale had to be five years ago, give or take, just before the battle with...with the red death. Hiccup pushed aside the rising bile in his stomach. Jumping to conclusions would get him, and more importantly Merida, killed. Bonnlöse chirped beside him as the small dragon stared up at the skies.

Hiccup swallowed a lump in his throat and pulled a letter out of his satchel before tying the letter to the Terrible Terror as quickly as he could. "Bonnlöse. If anything happens to me take this letter back to Berk. Understood?" The Terrible Terror nodded his head in acknowledgement. Smart dragon. "Keep an eye on the Queen alright." Again, the small dragon nodded. Without any further orders, the small dragon flew off back towards the safety of the hall.

"What was that?" Merida asked glancing between the fight and the entrance to the hall.

"Insurance policy. It'll inform Berk of the situation here. In case I can't." Merida slowly nodded her head. A tight knot forming in her stomach.

"Let's hope that letter never needs to get sent."

"Agreed."

"First things first, we're going to herd them away from the castle. Don't shoot at them. Your arrows can and will kill them. Me and Toothless can easily handle this." Hiccup looked up to the sky again, carefully scanning the dark edges of the sky. Still no sign. "I need you to keep an eye for that new...well...new er dragon. If it shows up I need to know right away."

Merida nodded her head in understanding and gripped tighter onto Hiccup's leather belt as Toothless zoomed up into the sky. The ground swiftly dissipated beneath them. The warm glow of the signal torches dissipating as the icy grip of darkness consumed them. Hiccup leaned in as Toothless spun swiftly around, using his forward momentum to shift him into a dive. Merida felt her stomach lurch into her mouth and fought tooth and nail to push her recent dinner back into the abdomen.

A low whining noise drew her attention and she glanced around to locate the source of the noise. "Head down!" Hiccup hollered, leaning down to the point he was practically hugging Toothless's head. It was then that Merida realized that the soft screaming was actually emanating from Toothless. Merida buried her head into Hiccup's back as the darkness lit up in a purple flash. A loud scream of pain erupted from one of the Nadders that was in the middle of attacking a

trio of guards. Toothless spun and circled back in less than ten seconds flat and released another plasma bolt. The Nadder withdrew and flew up and away from the battle. "Great job bud! Alright, lets get some altitude and reexamine the fight." A loud roar vibrated the air molecules around them and froze everything in its path.

"Hiccup! I see it! Down there in the tree line!" Merida shouted, pointing her finger at the edge of the fair grounds. Hiccup glanced downward and saw nothing. Glancing backward he saw Meridas face change to one of shock.

"It was right there Hiccup! I saw it!" Hiccup glanced at Toothless who was staring intently into the forest. By the expression on his face, the Night Fury hadn't seen anything either.

"Let's take a closer look bud." Hiccup said patting Toothless's head. Toothless grumbled in agreement and dived down towards the fair grounds.

Landing, Merida hopped off and arched an arrow in her bow. "Merida. Get back here!" Hiccup hissed, his voice low to conceal their position. Merida waved him off and examined the trees closely. She couldn't see anything in the darkness, though years of night hunting would allow her to easily pick up any disturbances in the tree line.

"Merida. Please, get back here." Hiccup pleaded, examining the tree line with hawk-like precision. Goosebumps riddled his arms and he could feel the hairs on his neck stand on edge. Toothless body tensed up as the Night Fury growled angrily. A rustle of the bush to their left caught their attention and Merida reflexively shot an arrow in the general direction. A medium sized doe sprang from the bush and ran away from them to the opposite side of the fair ground. Hiccup released a breath he didn't notice he was holding.

"See? Just a deer. Come on. Lets go."

"I didn't see a deer Hiccup! I saw a dragon!" Merida snapped, refusing to take her eyes off the tree line.

"Lets go Merida. The Castle is still under attack. We're wasting time here." Merida sighed in defeat. He was right, which she was coming to realize was surprisingly a lot. She turned around, her bow at her side and her shoulders slumped in defeat. Her gaze remained at her feet as she slowly made her way back towards Hiccup. A snap of a branch brought her gaze upwards. Meridas scream pierced the night as her eyes widened in horror.

Hiccup didn't have enough time to react as him and Toothless were violently whipped to their left. A loud crunch ringed in Hiccups ears as the pair slammed through trees before slamming into the ground. Hiccups eyes slowly opened and he closed them again, hoping that the world would stop spinning in circles. He motioned to get up and cried out. He touched his ribs and grimaced. Definitely bruised, maybe broken. Greeeat. He opened his eyes again and was greeted by a very, very, very angry dragon charging at him.

Hiccup rolled as a large mace slammed down on the ground. The soft grass vibrating violently at the shock wave. Hiccup saw his shield and immediately grabbed it. He held it outwards as the enraged dragon

pushed the offensive. A large claw scratched his shield, sparks flew into the air as the dragon swung its mace-like tail once again. Hiccup had managed to stand up before the tip of the tail slammed into his shield. The Gronckle-Iron shield absorbed most of the blow, but the shear force sent Hiccup skidding across the ground. Again, Hiccup cried out in pain as his ribs slammed into a nearby tree. Hiccup rolled as fire spewed out towards him.

Merida pulled out her bow as quickly as she could. She notched an arrow and released. The arrow hit and stuck, but seemed to only irritate the dragon as it barreled down on Hiccup. Another arrow struck the dragons tail, throwing the large beast off on it's next strike. If she had been a fraction of a second slower the giant tail-hammer would have sliced the young viking in half. She didn't celebrate that small victory though as Hiccup slammed into a tree, crying out in pain. Merida released another arrow and it struck the dragon in its back. Fire bellowed from its mouth and consumed Hiccup from her view. Her stomach dropped to her feet as horrific belief hit her. Hiccup was dead. The scrawny viking who had volunteered to help the highlands, Viking kinds sworn enemy, in their hour of need. Dead. Dead, dead, dead, dead, dead. She had only just begun to know the young man and already she knew life would never be the same.

Another arrow slammed into the dragon's neck and it roared in rage. Whilst Meridas mind had wandered, her body remained at the task at hand. The dragon turned swiftly and charged at Merida. Her blood ran cold as the dragon spewed a bluish fire towards her. The flames rolled towards her like a tidal wave. If her life wasn't endanger she could really enjoy the sight. How the flames seemed to roll over another as they pushed forward reminded her of the waves crashing against the shore of the lock. There really was no point in running. The open field provided no sanctuary from the flames. Merida wasn't one to run from a fight. She wouldn't be known for running from one now. She stared at the flames. At least she'll see something pretty before she dies.

Everything went black and warm just before the flames hit her. She thought death would be cold and unwelcoming. This was actually pretty comfortable. She felt somewhat constricted and was more then sure she should be in extreme pain at this moment. Abruptly the darkness lifted and she was meet by the piercing green eyes of a Night Fury.

"Toothless!" Merida cried and quickly grabbed onto the Night Furies head. Toothless purred softly and fully removed his wings from around her. His attention averting to the infuriated dragon. She glanced towards his saddle, expecting it to be empty. Instead she was greeted by the sight of a very familiar black-armoured viking.

Hiccup sat up from his hunched down position on Toothless' back. His black armor emitted smoke from being superheated. The cold scottish night did little to hinder the white steam as Hiccup glanced down at Merida. His helmet covered his face and steam bellowed from it. The life-saving shield glowed a molten red from taking the brunt of the flames.

Merida memorized every detail of the sight before her. It truly was a sight that songs were written about. Legends would be told of this man, if they already hadn't. Black-smith be damned. This man in front

of her was a warrior. No ifs, ands, or buts about it. Hiccup returned his gaze back towards the dragon as it slowly approached them. He leaned in towards Toothless and spoke softly, "Alright bud. Seems like this dragon doesn't like to fight in the air. Lets use that to our advantage." He looked once again to Merida. "Stay in the cover of the woods." Merida glared up and pointed her chin upwards.

"I will not hide!" Hiccup glared down at her. She wouldn't admit that she thought the sight was imposing...ok maybe a little.

"You'll do as I say or we'll both get killed." There was no hint of skepticism in his voice and she knew what he said to be true.

They had plenty of time to fight some other time. He'll pay for his small victory, not now though. She nodded her head in reluctant acceptance and retreated to the cover of the woods. Her bow remained at the ready and awaiting Hiccups signal.

The dragon charged towards them; a feral roar booming from its serrated jaw. Toothless leapt into the air as the tail-hammer swept horizontally at them. A few trees exploded into splinters as the tail obliterated anything it touched. Toothless swiftly rolled and shot a plasma bolt into the dragons side, knocking the behemoth to its side. It didn't stay down long, and was on its feet and retreating towards the forest line.

"We can't let it reach the trees Toothless!" Hiccup hollered above the roar of winds. Toothless shot once again, this time the plasma bolt struck the side of the dragons head. The monstrous scottish dragon swung its head towards them and emitted a low, demonic growl. If they wanted a real fight, it'll give it to them. Wings as dark as an abyss spread forth as the dragon stood upon its hind legs. With a massive gust of wind, the dragon was airborne. "Aw Hel'," Hiccup groaned. The dragon plowing towards them was faster than a freight train.

"So! Remind me to keep this dragon on the ground!" Hiccup cried out, the dragon speeding towards them as the pair took evasive action. Keeping up with a Night Fury was a laborious work for any dragon and the closest that came were Nadders. Yet here he was, just barely staying out of biting range. Hiccup glanced back and was horrified to realize that the artificial tail was practicly tickling the demonic dragons mouth. "Toothless! We got to pick up the speed!" Toothless pumped his wings extra hard, yet what normally gained them tens of feet with other dragons only gave them mere inches.

An arrow of fire shot from the dragons mouth and slammed into Hiccups shoulder. Thank Odin his armor was built for this punishment. Though he wondered how compromised his armor had become now. He glanced down for a quick assessment. Good news seemed to have missed the memo of the battle today. The straps on his chest were charred and a few were now flapping in the wind. He could feel his chest plate shift unrestrained against his chest as another strap loosened. Loki must be playing some trick on him. No ones luck was this bad in battle.

Hiccups shoulder guard ripped off with a violent crack as another fire bolt slammed into it. The fabric beneath it immediately ignited and Hiccup did his best to pat down the flames. If he took another shot like that he'd lose his whole arm.

Hiccup looked back, hoping to have enough time to formulate some sort of plan. Hiccup's breath caught as he realized the dragon was gone. Vanished into thin air. "Toothless!" Hearing his rider's distressed call, Toothless glanced back and was also surprised by the sudden disappearance.

"Where'd it go?" Hiccup glanced around in frightened panic. Nothing was worse than losing the dragon you were currently fighting with. Hiccup glanced towards the fair grounds and could just spot out a tiny red flame. Hiccup realized, with growing horror, that it was not a small fire. It just so happened to be the uncontrollable hair of the Highland princess.

Hiccup swore fervently. Praying to every god he could think of in hopes that the dragon had decided it had had enough and not decided to pick an easier target.

**\*\*So? How was it? Is the dragon after Merida or has it really decided to cut its loses and fly off? All I got to say is that the next chapter adds more questions to the pile.\*\***

## 11. Chapter 11

**\*\*A/N\*\***

**\*\*Sorry for the wait. But I just recently took the ACT and SAT so was a bit brain dead and didn't feel like writing. Also my birthday just recently passed so i was pulled away from the computer. \*\***

**\*\*Hope you all en\*\*\*\*joy the chapter!\*\***

**\*\*R&R!\*\***

## Chapter 11

### Mjolnir

Merida remained in the cover of the trees. Watching as the large dragon barreled down upon Hiccup and Toothless. She reached down to grab another arrow, her fingers brushing against open air. She looked at the quiver and her face fell. Empty. Merida dove to the ground as the trees in front of her exploded from the hammer-tail. She stood and watched as Toothless shot a plasma bolt into the dragons side. Screaming, the large dragon moved to retreat back into the forest.

Another blast and the dragon stopped dead in its tracks. A low growl escaping its maw as the dragon lept into the air. Merida watched in horror as the two dragons zoomed off. Toothless flying for his life, that...\_monster\_...flying to kill them.

After a few precious minutes of not hearing the fight, Merida stepped out of the protection the tree line had provided. She could see Hiccup and Toothless hovering mid air. No other dragon in sight. Where'd it go? She could see the pair returning towards her. Maybe they could explain what happened.

Toothless was flying as fast as he could. A light scream echoing

behind them as Toothless built up speed, the trademark sign of an approaching Night Fury. Only a few more feet left. Toothless lurched to the side and Hiccup yelped in surprise. Thank Thor that Toothless managed to correct himself before they slammed into any trees. "What in Valhalla was that!" Hiccup yelled, quickly scanning to find out what happened. Toothless screeched as they were once again slammed to the side, this time they weren't so lucky. The ground was merciless as dirt cascaded around them from the force of their impact.

The splintering sound of wood echoed throughout the forest as a large tree slowly toppled over. To say Hiccup was disorientated would be the understatement of the century. His head felt heavy and his limbs weighed too much to lift. Not to mention that the entire world seemed to be upside down. With the snap of a branch, Hiccup lurched in a downwards motion. It was then that Hiccup realized that even though he heard the crash landing of a dragon, he hadn't personally landed. Hiccup glanced upwards towards the ground. He was caught in a tree alright. Hiccup groaned and looked down to see what had caught him.

His entire prosthetic was shoved into a comb of branches that had snared his prosthetic leg. By the looks of it, even if he managed to get free he wouldn't be able to walk on it. The wood had splintered in various places and wouldn't hold his weight, not to mention the spring was twisted and would take at least a day in the forge to reshape. The only way he was still being supported by the tree, he reasoned, was that the leather straps on his prosthetic had intertwined with the branches.

\_\*\*SNAP!\*\*\_

Well...\_was\_ being supportedâ€¦|

\*\*MEANWHILE...\*\*

Merida watched as Hiccup and Toothless were shoved to the side. She didn't see anything hit them, or even get near them. That was until the infamous duo were slammed downwards. She could have sworn she saw something, but as fast as it appeared it was gone. Ignoring the churning of her stomach, Merida threw caution to the wind and ran into the forest.

Following a trail of splintered branches, Merida stopped at the base of a large tree. Toothless laid sprawled out on the ground beneath it and moaned in pain. "Toothless!" She ran up to his head and knelt down, cradling his massive head in her lap. The Night Fury's eyes were half open as his piercing green eyes stared up at her. With a small whimper, Toothless closed his eyes again. Merida looked from his head towards the rest of his body.

His right wing was bent and clearly broken. A bright red mark on his side seemed to be blood. Touching it, Merida felt the warm liquid slide off her fingers. Definitely blood. "Oh Toothlessâ€¦|.what happenedâ€¦|" Merida said softly, comforting the dragon as much as she could. Merida felt her stomach knot as she gazed at the empty saddle on Toothless back.

"Where's Hiccup, Toothless?"

Toothless eyes opened once again and he glanced around. The pain he

was experiencing had made him forget about his companion. Groaning, Toothless struggled to his feet. The pain was too much; with a cry, Toothless fell back down. "Toothless!" Merida wrapped her arms around his neck to comfort him and prevent him from getting back up. "Please, stay still. I'll go find him." Toothless winced softly and struggled for a second before stilling. Already exhausted.

Sensing that Toothless's struggle was over, Merida gently stood up and checked her surroundings. The young viking couldn't have been far. He wouldn't have left Toothless' side for anything, especially in his current condition.

\_\*\*SNAP!\*\*\_

Merida's head snapped backwards as she saw a figure fall from a tree and crash into the ground. Merida raced towards it, realizing that the figure had to have been Hiccup. The young viking hero laid on his back, his feet resting on the side of the tree. With a groan, Hiccup rolled and laid on his stomach. His neck felt stiff and his stump throbbed in pain as the blood returned to his legs.

"Hiccup!" His gaze lifted from the forest floor to be greeted by a flurry of red and blue.

"You crazy lamb! What are you doing up in a tree!?"

Hiccup rubbed his head and looked up, realizing his head was now resting in Merida's lap and she was looking down at him. "Ugh...just enjoying the view I guess!" Hiccup said sarcastically. "Where's Toothless?"

"He's back there. I think his wings broken and he's bleeding from the side." Almost immediately, Hiccup was up on his feet, but the moment his left foot touched the ground the wood splintered and Hiccup fell towards the ground. Merida reacted quickly though and caught him. Glancing down, she noticed the irreparable state of the prosthetic. She helped Hiccup lean against the tree as he tried to catch his breath.

"What happened Hiccup?" He looked up at her blue eyes and shook his head.

"We got hit out of nowhere. I think it might be a changewing. It's the only thing I can think of that could surprise us like it did. Even then they don't pack nearly as much force as what we got hit with." Hiccup's eyes lit up. "Unless!"

A low growl emanated from the tree off to their left. The large shape of a dragon came into view, as if it was made from the trees itself. Merida backed up a few to stand next to Hiccup, taken aback from the sudden appearance. The hammer on its tail thumped against the ground steadily. 'It can disappear. Just like a changewing. Dear Thor, why?' Hiccup's back pressed against the tree. They were defenseless. Hiccup stared at the tail, a name suddenly springing into mind.

"Mjolnir!" Hiccup whispered. Merida glanced at him.

"What?" Hiccup glanced towards Merida, realizing he had said that out loud.

"Mjolnir," He looked towards the dragon. "'That which smashes'.\_ Born from the fires of Sindri and Brokkr during the creation of the infamous hammer. Everything in it's path is destroyed. Untrainable. Do not engage, do not run, do not hide. Your only hope is to pray for Thor's intervention." He again looked towards Merida. "Mjolnir. A fitting name for the killer of a princess and the heir to the Hairy Hooligans."

Meridas eyes widened at the statement. So he wasn't just a blacksmith. He was the son of Stoick the vast. Chief of the most powerful tribe in the barbaric archipelago. No wonder he was tight lip about himself. If the roles were reversed she would be doing the exact same thing. She couldn't help but feel a little hurt though, from being lied to.

Further thought was interrupted as a large hammer slammed into the head of the Mjolnir. "Hey you overgrown sack of Haggis! Leave my daughter alone!"

\*\*So how was it? \*\*Looks like Hiccup isn't the only one ready to go head to head with a dragon. \*\*\*\*

## 12. Chapter 12

\*\*A/N\*\*

\*\*UGH...It was like pulling teeth when it came to writing this chapter. I simply couldn't finish it for the life of me. Writers block kills. Especially when you suddenly get an idea for \_another\_ story. No need to worry though. I'm not going anywhere. If anything I'm staying here for a LONG time. \*foreshadow\*\*

\*\*Anyways. R&R!\*\*

## Chapter 12

### The Bear King

Fergus ducked as a large wagon was thrown at him. The castle was in complete disarray, yet it had a sense of order. Archers on the walls were providing cover fire while soldiers on the ground fought the dragons off and escorted the civilians away from danger. Fergus looked to the skies to see a large black streak zoom by, a purple flash and a bluish dragon was screaming in pain. Fergus grabbed a large sword and ran into battle.

With a deep growl, a Monstrous Nightmare stalked towards two cowering children. They had been separated from their parents early on and had winded up bumping straight into the murderous dragon. Before the dragon could take another step, Fergus let loose a loud war cry and charged forward. His long sword swept outward in a horizontal arc. The tip of the blade grazed the dragons hide as it backpedaled, staying just out of reach. Two more slashes and Fergus managed to position himself between the dragon and children.

"If ya want the wee lad and lass you'll have to come through me." The Nightmare growled, sparkling white teeth illuminated his mouth. Blood dripped from its mouth, a clear sign of a fresh kill. Any sane man



would have fled from such a sight. But Fergus was the Bear King. Sanity didn't come with title. Fergus charged forward, the Nightmare roared and opened its wings. Setting itself on fire, it charged forward towards the Scottish king.

In three mighty steps, the two clashed. With a mighty swing, Fergus slashed at the underbelly of the dragon. The blade scraped across the rough scales. A slight pool of blood accumulated on the cut. The Nightmare slashed out. Its razor sharp claws scraping the bear hide on the king's back. Spots of fire ignited on the fur coat as the King sidestepped another claw meant for his neck. Fergus slashed once again, this time cutting the dragon's wing. Roaring in pain, the Nightmare backed up again. Shrugging, Fergus's fur coat fell off. It would do him no good if it burned him alive. Fergus held the sword diagonally across his face. Ready to counter any attack that the dragon made.

What Fergus didn't count on though, was for the dragon to use its tail. The long sword clanged to the ground as the fiery tail slammed into the king. Fergus groaned as his body rolled. The pain was minimal. Nothing the great Bear King could handle, yet, fighting a dragon without a weapon would be impossible, even for him. Well...not impossible, Vikings used to do it all the time. But they had years of training and experience. This was his first one on one fight with a dragon. Looking to his right, he spotted a large war hammer. Its flat head spiked to ensure maximum damage, its back pointed to allow the wielder to use it to penetrate any armor a foe may have.

Picking it up, Fergus ran towards the flaming dragon. The Nightmare screeched and opened its wings and leapt towards Fergus. With his shoulder cocked back, Fergus waited. Just when it seemed the mighty King would be consumed, Fergus swung his arm as hard as he could. A bone splintering crack echoed across the land as the hammer slammed into the Nightmare's exposed jaw. The dragon's head snapped violently towards the side and its fiery was instantly extinguished.

Most would have assumed he had instantly killed the dragon, but dragons were known for their hard headedness, Hiccup could attest to that. The force of the blow had not killed the dragon, instead the ferocious dragon laid unconscious. Fergus sighed heavily, one down a dozen or so more to go. Fergus looked up towards the fair grounds. He could just see the fiery red hair of his beloved daughter. Where was Hiccup? He swore that he'd look after her. Just within his peripheral vision he caught a glimpse of a black shadow.

He could see Hiccup and his dragon flying as fast as they could. Fergus didn't waste a second and was running off towards the fair grounds.

It didn't take him long to reach the outskirts of the fair grounds. A crash to his right stopped him dead in his tracks. Gripping his war hammer, Fergus ran off in that direction. Merida stood next to Hiccup. His arm draped over her shoulders as they struggled to help him stand. A large dragon appeared in front of them. Fergus took a step back in surprise. The large dragon drummed its tail on the ground, the look in its eyes told him all he needed to know. It was going to kill them. Fergus cocked his arm back and heaved the large war hammer as hard as he could.

The weapon smashed into the dragon's head. "Hey you overgrown sack of

Haggis! Leave my daughter alone!"

Merida and Hiccup watched the rage flood into Fergus face as he body slammed the dragon. In one swift motion, Fergus grabbed the hammer and slammed it down onto one of the dragons front , the Mjolnir stood up on its hind legs and bellowed fire towards Fergus. Having no shield, Fergus seeked refuge from the inferno behind a tree.

Luckily for both Merida and Hiccup the flames were not close enough to burn them. Hiccup looked away from the fire, the heat stinging his eyes. His gaze rested on his shield and a satchel. "Merida! Grab my shield and that satchel!" Merida quickly followed his gaze and found them. She ran off to them. Fire erupted in front of her as the Mjolnir redirected its attention of the princess. Merida dived down as more fire surrounded her.

"Oye! You poor excuse for a lizard! I'm not done with ye yet!" Fergus slammed his hammer against the dragon again; connecting with the dragons large wings. Furious, the dragon swept its tail at the king, striking him and sending him flying back into a near by tree. Fergus slide down the trees base and slumped forward, knocked out. "Da!" Merida cried out. She took a step towards him before Hiccup yelled out. "Merida! My shield and satchel! Quick!"

\ The weapon and satchel were just at her feet. She reached down and ran as fast as she could back to Hiccup. The dragon turned its head and growled at them. Not liking the sudden activity of the two. "A plan would be nice Hiccup." Merida whimpered as the dragon began to close in for the kill. Hiccups fingers fumbled around as he attempted to open the satchel. Abandoning hope on opening the satchel regularly, Hiccup tore it open. Reaching in he retrieved a foul smelling pouch. "Cover your nose Merida."

Not needing to be told twice, she did so. The smell permeated her hand and soaked into her mouth. She gagged reflexively, her body desperately trying to rid her nostrils of the smell. Hiccup's chest was slightly puffed outwards, having taken a deep breath in order to not smell the foul pouch. Pulling a lever on his shield, it transformed into a crossbow. Meridas eyes widen and she gasped slightly. Which was a very bad move as her throat burned severely and eyes watered. Hiccup loaded the bag and pointed the crossbow towards the Mjolnir, which open taking a small whiff of the pouch decided he wanted nothing to do with them. Before it could leave though, Hiccup fired.

The pouch slammed dead center in its face. The contents of the pouch exploded and covered the dragons face in a sticky green substance. The Mjolnir screeched and hissed as it desperately tried to wipe the foreign substance off its face. Its face rubbed in the dirt and against trees as the green slime began to turn into a green smoke. The violently jerking of the dragon slowed and its massive head bobbed around lightly. Merida could relate the current actions of the dragon to a man just leaving a pub after a late night with the lads.

The great dragon crashed towards the ground, it's chest rising and falling as the dragon entered a long slumber. Merida stared open mouthed at it. Just a few seconds ago it was ready to kill them, now it slept like it had never woken up. "What did you do to it?" She whispered in amazement.

"Gave it some of Astrids "Special herbal healing mix"." Hiccup laughed. Merida raised an eyebrow.

"Healing mix? Where's the healing in \_that?\_" Merida said, pointing a finger towards the sleeping dragon. Hiccup laughed again.

"\_Exactly.\_ We learned that when exposed to air for long periods of time it turns into a gas, a powerful knockout one at that."

"How'd you figure that out?"

"Well there an outbreak of dragon hives. So Astrid came up with this herb to help relieve the pain and cure it. Half the village was out cold for \_hours\_." Hiccup laughed. "And it turns out it wasn't hives either. Just a weird shedding period the dragons were going through." Merida laughed at this too. An entire Viking village knocked out because of a teenage girl making herbs for shedding dragons.

"Well. Now that it's asleep, now what?" Merida asked, logic working its way back into her brain. It wasn't like they could simply \_carry\_ the giant beast. "Well. Uhh...there's a simple answer to that. And its-"

"You have no idea. Do you?" Merida interjected. Placing a hand on her hip and leaning her weight on one leg. Hiccup chuckled and rubbed the back of his head. Playing it off.

"Psh. Well of course I do. Every viking heir has a master plan."

"Hiccupâ€|"

"Ya I have no ideaâ€|"

\*\*Well, how was it? Hope you all enjoyed.\*\*

### 13. Chapter 13

\*\*A/N\*\*\*

\*\*Hey-o! Finished this chapter early so here you go! Hope you all enjoy it! \*\*

\*\*R&R!\*\*

### Chapter 13

#### New Plan

"Come on. Wakey, wakey." Merida cooed, slapping her hands gently on Fergus face. The King mumbled a reply and his eyes lidded open before closing once again. "UGH! It's hopeless 'iccup! The mans outs cold!" Merida cried, throwing her arms up in defeat and plopping down on the ground. Hiccup leaned against a tree and crossed his arm. A plan formulating in his head. His eyes lite up. "Merida, go check up on Toothless since I can't. I'm calling for help."

"What do you mean calling for he-?" Hiccup cupped his hands over his mouth and took a deep breath.

"AH-WHOOOOO!"

Startled, Merida jumped back. "What was that Hiccup?" Merida asked, confused and annoyed at the Viking. "Just watch." Hiccup said looking around. The darkness of the trees made it nearly impossible to see a few feet. The adrenaline from the fight had dissipated and she was left with poor vision. The leaves to her right rustled and a branch snapped to her left a few seconds later. "Hiccup?" Merida whispered, taking a few steps back towards him.

"It's ok Mer."

A blue dragon lept out of a bush and attached itself to Merida. Screaming, Merida fell down onto her butt. The Terrible Terror licked her face and chuckled humorously. "Ha, ha, ha very funny you scaly cat."

"Bonnlose. Come here boy. I got a message for you to give to the queen." Bonnlose ears perked up at the calling of his name. Seeing Hiccup, the dragon abandoned his red headed playmate and flew over to Hiccup.

"Hey bud!" Hiccup scratched the dragons neck, earning a soft purr. "Alright Bonnlose, take this letter back to the queen as quick as you can. Got it?" Hiccup said, tying a makeshift note to the dragons torso. While he was at it, he removed the insurance note. Since things seemed to be alright there wasn't a need for it. Bonnlose nodded his head and took off once Hiccup finished.

By now Merida was standing and staring at the quick exchange between human and dragon. "Dragon call. Very nice." Merida said smiling.

"Ya. Perfect in situations like this." Hiccup said, picking up a decent size branch and using it as a crutch/cane. "We better get to Toothless. Hearing that call he's probably freaking out." Merida nodded her head, agreeing that the Night Fury was probably having a panic attack by now.

"Ouch! Easy! Toothless I can't breath! Merida! Help!" The princess in question was hunched over laughing. Small snorts escaped her mouth as she continued to laugh. Hiccup was firmly wedged under the dragon. Toothless had wrapped his one good wing around his rider the moment he was close enough to. Hiccup's head poked out of the scaled cocoon. Toothless immediately began licking his face. To escape the onslaught of saliva, Hiccup reburied himself into Toothless wings. "Come on bud. I'm fine! Promise." Toothless poked his head down towards Hiccup. Sniffing him and inspecting any damage. The Night Fury had always been protective over the young viking and the past hour had only made him even more so.

"Awww. Toothless is just showing you how much he loves you." Merida smiled. Trying to catch her breath and failing. Resuming her laughing fit she bellowed over and continued laughing. Finally coaxing Toothless off, Hiccup stood and brushed down his clothing and wiped any saliva off his face and clothing. What he didn't realize though, was his hair sticking up in odd angles.

Merida wiped a tear away from her eyes. Sitting up, she looked up towards the unamused Hiccup. Upon seeing his hair she instantly fell into another fit of laughter. "What? Whats so funny?" He looked at her as clutched her stomach as she kept laughing. She just managed to point towards his hair. Hiccup raised an eyebrow in confusion and touched his hair. Instantly realizing what was wrong he patted his hair down.

"Very mature Merida.." Meridas laughter slowly stopped.

"Aw you wee lamb. Such a strong, terrifying viking ye are." Merida giggled, standing and brushing the grass and dirt off her dress.

"Princess!" The duo turned their heads to see three men appear from the bushes. Behind them a few more castle guards appeared. A muscular man stood in the front of the group. He wore a kilt wrapped around his shoulder and waist. Blue war paint/tattoos adorned his right arm and chest. His black hair covered one eye and he consistently shook it out of his eye.

The man to his right reminded Hiccup of Fishlegs. To his left stood a skinny man, his face elongated and hair spiked. If you'd ask Hiccup he seemed to be short a few marbles, just like the Thorston Twins.

Meridas face paled at the three men. She knew them all too well. "Ailbert Macintosh, Wee Dingwall, and Farlan McGuffin. Wh-what brings you all the way out here?" The man with the blue tattoos, young Macintosh, stepped forward.

"You know why Princess. Dunbroch is under attack and, as the treaty requires, we're here." The man took another step forward and Merida held her ground.

"That won't be necessary. An emissary from Berk has arrived, just a few days ago. I know that it must have been a long journey, but your help will not be required." Merida said calmly, choosing her words carefully to not offend the prideful young man.

Merida turned to look at Hiccup, who stood in front of Toothless as best he could. Ailbert looked over her shoulder at the crippled viking. He sneered once he spotted the missing leg. "An emissary you say? We don't need this viking...\_filth...\_" Ailbert turned his head towards Hiccup and spat at his foot, "to help us. This cripple deserves a short drop and sudden stop \*\*(hanging)\*\*." Merida gasped and her fists clenched.

"You take that back!"

"Why should I? \_It\_ probably doesn't understand a word I'm saying huh? Isn't that right \_barbarian?\_" Ailbert spoke, his words dripping with sarcasm and venom. Hiccup remained quiet. He could handle the harassment, he grew up with it on Berk for most his life. One man won't make him snap, especially when it could spark a war. "Ailbert! Stop it right this second! I will not have you insulting someone here to help us! If you utter so much as another word I \_will\_ take this to my Mother and Father. And you wouldn't want that. They like him." Macintosh stiffened at the threat and glared at the Princess. Wee

Dingwall and Farlan McGuffin stayed clear out of the fight. Angering the Princess was no easy task to undo.

Ailbert opened his mouth to retort, but instead he closed it. Not wanting to anger the same women he was planning on marrying. "Farlan, Wee Dingwall. Come help me carry Fergus back to the castle. The rest of ya. Do what Hiccup tells ya." Merida said, turning and leading the two lords towards her father. Hiccup watched her leave before turning to face the rest of the group. There was roughly twenty of them. Plenty of manpower to move two dragons. With that, Hiccup turned and began the laborious task of capturing one dragon, and healing another.

Hiccup sat on a bench in the main hall. Toothless laid next to the hearth, his wing bandaged and strapped to his side. Instead of being broken, as Merida had predicted, a joint in the wing and been dislocated giving it the appearance of being broken. A week or two and the wing should be healed enough to unbandage. Whether he could fly would be an entirely different story. Luckily dragons healed fairly fast, if not the Night Fury would drive everyone mad from being grounded for so long. "Ouch!" Hiccup yelled, glaring down at the royal healer. "You don't have to poke so hard." The old man looked up and frowned. He glanced down and rubbed the stump again, earning another yelp from Hiccup. "Seems like you fractured a bone." The aged healer gently cupped his stump and pushed, forcing Hiccup's knee towards his abdomen.

Hiccup felt his muscles tense and pull. He could feel his knee rub against something it shouldn't. Wincing, Hiccup's fingers dug into the wooden bench. The healer noticed this action and sighed heavily. "You dislocated your knee too. That won't be much of a problem though." In one swift motion the healer pulled down, popping the knee back into place. Hiccup swore fervently in Norse, to hell with him being a "royal healer", the man almost ripped off the remainder of his leg.

"I'm sorry. I know it hurt like hell. If you woulda had the the rest of yer like it wouldn't have been so bad. Especially if that leg wasn't fractured." The healer took out a bowl of some sweet smelling herbs and a roll of cheesecloth. He quickly smeared the green herbs on his stump. Hiccup frowned, an old sensation re-emerging. "I can feel my toes." He muttered, hating the sensation of the phantom limb. The healer didn't stop though and kept rubbing. "That's good then. Means the herb is working. It rejuvenates the nerves and heals the muscles. Bad thing is it causes phantom pains. It may be awhile before you can walk. But it will take a lot longer if I don't use it." Hiccup nodded his head. Glad that his recovery would be shortened instead of lengthened.

>Finishing wrapping his leg, the healer packed up his materials and left to inform the Queen and King, who was already awake and very lively. It hadn't even been five minutes before the royal family entered the hall. The triplets all taking turns caring for Bonnielose. Merida stayed behind the twins, ensuring that they behaved. Fergus and Elinor made their way directly to Hiccup. Hiccup motioned to stand but with a wave Fergus dismissed any idea of that. "Sit. We know what happened and you need your rest." Fergus said, towering over the viking heir.<p>

"We also know that you're not really who you say you are. Not entirely." Elinor said next. If she was upset she didn't show

it.

"I'm sorry your majesties. I hope you understand the reason for my deception." Hiccup said, head lowering and hoping that he wouldn't be executed.

"Theres no need for that lad. I would have expected the same from anyone in your position." Fergus said smiling happily.

"The healer said it'll take two weeks for you to heal. We expect you to take it easy these coming days." Elinor glanced towards Hiccup. "You and your dragon." She finished. Hiccup nodded his head.

"Of course m'lady." Hiccup nodded his head. Glad that he'll be keeping his.

They nodded their heads as they turned to leave. "Boys. Give the dragon back to Hiccup. I'm sure he needs to send a letter back home." The triplets pouted, but obeyed nonetheless. Once free of the triplets grasp, Bonnlose curled up on Hiccups lap and waited expectantly for the letter. "Not tonight little man. We rest tonight. I'll send a letter tomorrow. Have to inform Fishlegs on what he's volunteering for." And with that, the two dragons and their master climbed up the halls stairs to their room. All the while a tattooed man watched them.

\*\*So? How was it? I rewrote this chapter nearly three times. I really don't like Young Macintosh and actually had a version where he actually attacks Hiccup. Instead, i thought this would make things more interesting.\*\*

## 14. Chapter 14

\*\*A/N\*\*\*

\*\*Ahhhh...It feels good to post again. I just wanted to thank everyone for reviewing and reading the last chapter. Had a WHOLE bunch of people read it and start following. It inspires me all the more to keep writing. \*\*

\*\* FalconFate- I always saw him as egotistic. He's worse then Snotlout in my opinion when it comes to "getting the girl".\*\*

\*\* bearybeary-Guess we'll have to wait and see. Macintosh isn't known for their gifts of friendship.\*\*

\*\* Kitty-on-CRACK-I have no current plans for the witch. Especially since when I started writing this I had...uh..."forgot" her. heh..oops...\*\*

\*\* Superfan44-Thanks! I hope you like the upcoming chapter.\*\*

\*\* randomkitty101-You thought that was evil? HA! Wait till you see what happens next :)\*\*

\*\*Without further delay. Here's Chapter 14. R&R!\*\*

Chapter 14

## Dragon Trainer

It was dark. That much was clear. Hiccup looked to his right, then his left. Nothing was visible. \_'Where in Thor's name am I?\_' He thought, taking a cautious step forward. The ground beneath him crunched. A light breeze tickled at his neck and sent shivers down his spine. \_'Ok. I'm outside. But how'd I get out here?\_' Playing through the previous days events, he had no memory of leaving the castle after he went to bed. "Toothless? Where are you bud?" Hiccup whispered, his voice echoing all around him. He was in some type of enclosed area. \_"Maybe I'm not outside."\_ He out stretched his hands and began to walk precariously forward.

His fingers brushed against a smooth, rocky surface and he stopped dead in his tracks. Feeling it again it reminded him of the caves back on Berk. \_'Ok, I'm in a cave then. Why am I in a cave?\_'

"Toothless?" Hiccup called once more. He looked to his left and spotted a red glow in the distance. Against his better judgement and his gut instincts, Hiccups legs disobeyed him and began moving him towards the glowing light. A low grumble sounded from the end of the tunnel, it was quiet yet deep. What ever was down there wasn't small. The hairs on Hiccups neck stood on ends and goosebumps riddled his arms as he stepped into the edge of the glowing light.

The moment his body entered the light a powerful gust of hot air blasted through him. The heat was intense and Hiccup raised his arm to shield his face. Adjusting to the heat, Hiccup lowered his arm and gawked at the sight before him. It was a giant cave, at \_least\_ \_two\_ miles wide. He stood upon a ledge that was suspended Loki knows however feet above the bottom of the cave. Looking up, hiccup was astounded to see it went another five miles straight up. The entire cave was basked in an ominous red light. Hoping to find the source of this mysterious light, Hiccup stepped forward towards the edge of the ledge and peered down.

About a mile below him the entire cave floor was covered in a thick fog. The red glow comming from beneath it. In that moment Hiccup knew \_exactly\_ \_where\_ he was. He was on Dragon Island, \_before\_ the battle with the Red Death. His breath caught and he felt like his entire conscious was slipping from his grasp. \_'It's not possible! I can't be here! This can't be happening!\_' \_The cave around him began to shake violently in protest, he was \_very\_ \_much\_ here and the Island would prove it too him. Loose boulders fell down around him and Hiccup was forced to lay on the ground in seek of shelter. Holding on for dear life, an ear splitting roar emanated from the fog. A giant head rose out from the fog. In a matter of seconds it was staring down at Hiccup with disdain and thirst. Hiccup gulped, his throat and mouth deprived of any liquid.

It was a dragon, one that he had hoped to never see again in this life or the next. "Seadragonus Giganticus Maximus." A death. \_Thee\_ \_death. The very same dragon that caused the loss of his foot. "You can't-you aren't...you're dead. This isn't happening." Hiccup was now on his feet backing up. When his back pressed against solid wall he panicked and looked back. The tunnel he used to get here gone. The Red Death opened its giant mouth. A foul odor sweeping across the cave at breakneck speeds. The odor slammed into Hiccups face full forced, but he paid no heed to it. His body and mind were frozen in



place; racing to find any logical reason behind this.

The Red Death moved his mouth towards Hiccup, ready to swallow him and the earth around him. As the teeth closed behind Hiccup, Hiccup shut his eyes tightly, willing it to be all just a bad dream. Though by the burning sensation of his skin, it was everything but. \_\_

He was awake in an instant. His heart pounding in his chest as images of a battle long ago, but not forgotten, flashed through his mind. A pair of concerned green eyes fixated in him. His heart beat slowed as his mind registered who those eyes belonged to. Toothless whined softly; shoving his noise into Hiccups chest and purred. The Night Fury had sensed his riders distress and was immediately by his side.

It had been years since he dreamt of that infernal dragon. Especially in such vivid detail. During the first few weeks after the battle Hiccup went days without rest. The memory of the fight too fresh. Hiccup sighed and sat up, knowing that trying to sleep would be pointless. His nose scrunched up as a foreign sensation tingled up his left leg.

\_Toes\_.

He felt his toes. He hated the sensation. Removing the covers, Hiccup stared at the bandaged stump. His gaze shifted over to his right foot, his toes wiggling on command. It felt natural, just like it was supposed to. His gaze shifted back to his stump, phantom toes moving on their own accord.

Hiccup gasped sharply as another sensation shot up his leg. His fingers curled around the bed sheets as his eyes screwed shut. The moving he could deal with. The \_twisting\_ was something he couldn't stand for. It felt as if someone had just dislocated his ankle and spun it around 180 degrees. After a few agonizing seconds the pain dimmed and hiccup exhaled in relief. Hiccup looked towards the window, the predawn light barely on the horizon. "Well, what we going to do today bud?" Toothless snorted and looked down at his bandage wing, knowing full well they wouldn't be able to do what he \_really\_ wanted to do.

"I know bud. Hey! About we see if there's any fresh cod in the kitchen hm? Then we'll fix up my leg and check up on the other dragons." Toothless squirmed in delight, all ready on board at the mention of his favorite food.

"Hey! Wait up!" Hiccup called, scrambling to grab his crutch and chase down the hyperactive dragon.

The sun was now just above the horizon when Meridas room was flooded with light. Squinting, Merida groaned and rolled over, burying her face in the soft sheets. "Up, up, up. With the other lords surprise visit we must get the preparations for the feast ready." Queen Elinor said, walking around the bed and opening the door. A handful of maids walked in, ready to help get Merida ready for the day. Groaning, Merida unburied herself and preceded with the morning ritual. "Did you know Hiccup was a lord?" Elinor abruptly asked, picking out her daughters dress for the day.

The question caught Merida by surprise and she stiffened slightly.

She shook her head, though the cover around the tub hide it. "No. I did not."

"He's definitely not what I would expect for the heir of a Viking clan. Especially one that rides dragons." Elinor continued, picking up a green dress with white sleeves. Merida peeked out, looking at the dress she would have to wear. She groaned. "Ugh...muuum...do I have to wear that one? It's so tight! And that dreaded head covering hurts!"

"I'm sorry Merida, but yes. Its tradition, and I think we've broken enough tradition for one lifetime."

"Yours' maybeâ€|" Merida mumbled, folding up her arms and sinking into the depths of the bath. Elinor sighed, deciding it best to play it like she didn't hear that. One of the maids leaned forward towards Merida. "It shouldn't be to bad m' lady. It really brings out your figure. Plus wouldn't you want to look nice for \_Hiccup\_." The other maids giggled as Merida turned a dark shade of red and sunk further into the bath. The giggling immediately stopped as Elinor cast a suspicious glare at the trouble makers.

"I can't work like this!" Hiccup stopped mid stride.

"Well who else will? We need a blacksmith! And you're the best we got!" Hiccup recognized the voice instantly as to be Fergus's.

"Don't you think I know that!? I've been serving you loyally ever since the Viking invasion, and then the Roman incursions! I can craft anything you ask meâ€|.well...use tooâ€|" The mans voice dropped off.

"You can still!"

"No I can't! I'm a cripple! A blacksmith with no hand!" The conversation by now had fully grasped Hiccups attention.

Following the voices, Hiccup found himself standing outside the healer's house. Entering, Hiccup was greeted by the broad figure of Fergus as he looked towards Hiccup.

"Ah! Hiccup! Just the man I was looking for!"

"Uh...your highnessâ€|" Hiccup said, slightly confused. Fergus moved as he revealed another large man sitting on a bed.

"Campbell. This is Hiccup. Son of Stoick the vast, chieftain of the Hairy Hooligans." The man sitting on the bed stiffened, his blonde beard swaying as he did so. Hiccup could swear he was gobber. Well, without the missing tooth and leg. The hand though, Hiccup looked at the stump that used to be his left hand.

The man subconsciously moved it, hiding it from view. Fergus then proceed to gesture towards Hiccup. "Hiccup, this is Campbell. The best blacksmith Scotland has to offer."

"Former blacksmith." Campbell amended, eyeing his former left hand.

"Former?" Hiccup questioned, raising an eyebrow.

"Ye heard me. Former blacksmith. I can't work with only one hand." Hiccup looked at him incredulously.

"What are you talking about? Of course you can! All you need is a prosthetic."

"Well I hope you know someone who can make one. Because I surely can't."

Hiccup smiled. "Of course I can. I need to fix my leg while I'm at it." Campbell raised an eyebrow before looking down at his missing prosthetic.

"Besides that it's not there, what's wrong with your leg?"

"The prosthetic I had on was destroyed in a fight. Was actually on my way with Toothless to fix it."

"Toothless?" Campbell asked, not knowing of the infamous Night Fury waiting outside. At the mention of his name, said Night Fury poked his head inside. The instant Campbell and Toothless made eye contact, Campbell was already squirming away. "Tha-thats a-a-a-a-dddd-dra-dra€|"

"Dragon." Fergus finished, chuckling at his friends antics.

"Obviously." Hiccup said, scratching the underside of Toothless head.

Campbell was stunned into silence, how was he supposed to respond to this? There was a dragon sitting right there not even ten feet away. Granted it may not be the same species that stripped him of the use of his hand, it was a dragon none the less. "You-you," Campbell swallowed a thick lump in his throat, "You ride him?" Hiccup nodded the head.

"He's a big softy too, but don't let that foul you. Toothless is very dangerous when him or I are threatened."

Campbell slowly stood, cautious of the soft warning growl emitting from the Night Fury. Glancing at the saddle, Campbell quickly discovered the artificial tail fin that granted Toothless the ability of flight. Raising a finger, Campbell pointed at the artificial fin. "Who made that?" Following his finger, Hiccup smiled. "Well that would be me. Gobber made a version too, but the Berkian weather takes a toll on the gear so I had to make a new one. Several new ones." Hiccup muttered the last, sour that he still hadn't found a material strong enough to last through a single winter in riding condition. Campbell stopped and raised an eyebrow.

"Gobber?"

Hiccups eyes lite up. "Oh! Gobber. Ya, he's the head smith for Berk. Learned everything there is about blacksmithing from him. He lost both his hand and leg in a dragon raid. Never let that slow him down though." The Scottish blacksmith eyes widen in surprise.

"He lost both his hand and leg?" He asked incredulously. Hiccup nodded his head.

"Yep, a month apart at that too." Campbell's gaze lowered to his missing hand.

"How do you do it boy? The forge is a dangerous place, even with all limbs attached." His gaze then turned towards Fergus's missing leg. "Missing a leg throws a man off. That could kill in the forge." Fergus had been notorious for his clumsiness after his leg was severed. The King had gotten better, but he would never be the same.

Hiccup smirked. "Once a blacksmith, always a blacksmith. You just have to be more careful. The longer you do it the easier it'll become." He turned towards Toothless. "Come on bud. Let's head towards the forge and get to work." Hiccup glanced back at the missing hand, mentally noting the dimensions required to make the hand.

Patience was not something Merida had plenty of. And today it was especially true. Elinor had practically chained her at the ankle to keep her within the castle walls. "No, no, no. That right there goes over there." Elinor said, pointing towards a stuffed bear. The soldiers moving it groaned but otherwise didn't complain. Merida sat on her throne and sighed heavily. She slouched slightly, which was instantly reprimanded by her mom saying "A princess never slouches." Merida stiffened again, trying to keep her head held high as she "supervised" the decorating for the night's festivities.

A loud yell drew her attention from the festivities. A few guards rushed past her and out into the back of the castle, following the sound of the yelling. A roar shook the castle as even more guards rushed past her. By now the Queen had stopped and was watching the activity unfold. Fergus abruptly rushed in. "Elinor! Are you okay?" The Queen looked back towards her husband and nodded her head.

"What's going on Fergus?" She asked, looking back towards the yelling.

"The red dragon is up and about. It surprised a few of the guards so they called for help."

"Where's Hiccup?" Fergus looked over towards his daughter, a slight look of concern on her face. Fergus sighed. "Training, the damned beast." Before either of the two could protest, Merida was up and running towards the holding pens. She was not going to miss an opportunity to watch Hiccup train a fully wild dragon.

"What are we waiting for! We should kill it now!" A guard called, a few others yelling in agreement. In front of them laid a Monstrous Nightmare, tied down with cast iron cuffs. Metal bars wrapped around the dragon's back and strapped down into the hard granite below. A large, cast iron muzzle kept the dragon's mouth shut and prevented it from breathing fire. Thrashing its head around, the Nightmare attempted to free itself from its confines. "We do no such thing until the king says so!" Another called, earning a few disgruntled boos.

The Nightmare lit itself on fire, squirming violently as it tried to

burn through the metal bars. It was pointless though, The bars were too thick and didn't even turn the slightest of reds. Some of the guards unsheathed their swords, ready to slay the beast the moment it was loose. "You're not going to kill it." A voice said from behind the crowd of scotsmen. Turning, the quickly made way for the Viking heir.

"Says who?" Another voice called. Turning their heads, more scotsmen made way for Ailbert Macintosh.

The two opposing forces glared at each other. "Says me. I've dealt with dragons before and theres no need to kill them."

"Oh really? Your ability with dragons was clearly shown by your \_presstine \_take down of the mallet of a dragon. Oh what was its name? Hammer?" Hiccup bristled at the mention of the Mjolnir.

"Mjolnir. That was the first time I've ever dealt with \_that\_ dragon."

"And how do we know you've dealt with this one?" Hiccup rolled his eyes, he was \_really \_starting to hate the simple minded scotsmen.

Hiccup brushed past the guards, a few calling out for him to back up. He stopped right in front of the Nightmare and knelt down, his new prosthetic creaking and groaning as the freshly maid metal strained under the unfamiliar position. The Monstrous Nightmare growled a low warning. "Its ok. Look," Hiccup held up his hands, showing he was unarmed. "I'm unarmed." The Nightmare glared at Hiccup, but otherwise made no noise.

"That's a good boy." Hiccup gently scratched the Nightmares snout, earning a low purr from him. "Now, I bet it'll be more comfortable without this muzzle huh?" Hiccup moved to unlatch the muzzle when he felt the steel tip of a blade press against the side of his neck. Hiccup froze instantly.

"I wouldn't do that if I were you, \_Viking.\_" Ailbert had unsheathed his sword and was pressing it firmly to Hiccups neck. The other guards looked anxiously between the two. Unsure of whether or not to help the Viking heir, or let the young lord do as he pleases.

The Nightmare growled lowly, not liking the hostility of the new commer one bit. "I'm taking off this muzzle." Hiccup stated, turning his head back to continue his work. The blade pressed deeper into his neck and Hiccup bit his bottom lip to restrain himself from showing his pain. "You do that and I'll kill you right now viking. You're endangering us all."

"Theres no danger, he's tamed." Hiccup said, forcing his words to be calm instead of laced with venom.

"\_Trained?\_ Ha! I doubt that that beast would be trained so quick." Ailbert sneered.

"Then let me show you." Hiccup pleaded, moving again to unfasten the dragons muzzle.

"I \_SAID\_ not another move viking!" Ailbert hissed, his blade moving towards Hiccups adams apple. Any cut and Hiccup would bleed to death in mere seconds. Ailbert and Hiccup glared at each other, neither one willing to give first. That all ended one a double blade axe positioned itself at dead center on Albert's neck. The scotsmen froze, wondering who would dare to point a blade at the lord. Hiccup glanced towards the wielder of the blade and gasped sharply. The air had been sucked out of his lungs and he was left gaping like a fish at the figure before him.

Blue eyes glanced his way before burying themselves on their opponent.

"Hello Hiccup." A cool, calculated voice whispered. Hiccup swallowed a lump growing in his throat and spoke, his voice barely audible and panic stricken.

"Hi Astrid."

\*\*So how was it? Looks like Astrid decided to drop on in. Question is, \_why? \_\*\*

## 15. Chapter 15

\*\*A/N\*\*

\*\*Hello all! Thanks for all your awesome reviews! I just wanted to clarify that I have no intention of making Astrid mean or unlikable. On the contrary, I'm making her seem more sympathetic. I am in fact a Hicstrid fan, but I'm also a Merricup fan. So it I'm actually divided on who Hiccup should be with. Which is why I'm going to make it such a difficult choice for Hiccup and you all.\*\*

\*\* The following chapter gives us background on what is happening on Berk and gives us a reason to Astrids sudden appearance.\*\*

\*\*Hope you all enjoy it! R&R!\*\*

## Chapter 15

### Domestic Issues

\*\*ONE WEEK AGO\*\*

"I can't believe he just left you like this. Sure shows how much he loves you." Ruffnut spoke. The blonde teen looked over at the Viking prodigy beside her. Astrid remind silent as she gazed out over the horizon. She'd be lying if she said she wasn't heart broken. Five years, that's how long they have been dating. Five amazing years. She was certain that he'd propose soon. The last few hours had placed a major crack in that idea though.

\_'How could he choose THEM over me...?' \_Astrid thought, refusing to allow the swell of emotions over take her. She was a \_Viking \_for Odins sake. But how could she resist the swell of anger, sadness, and fury that plagued her fractured heart? "I mean, if I was you I'd probably murder him." Ruffnut continued, unwavered by Astrids lack of response. Ruffnut was defiantly \_not\_ helping with controlling her anger. She needed to vent some of her anger \_now. \_

She was on her feet quick as lightening, startling Ruffnut from her babbling. With a mighty war cry, Astrid grabbed her axe and flung it as hard as she could at a nearby tree. The blade sunk all the way to the axe handle. Astrid felt all the emotions plaguing her drain away, her fingertips tingled as she breathed steadily. "Whoa...glad I'm not a tree..." Ruffnut whispered in awe, staring as Astrid easily removed the embedded axe.

Astrid stared down at the blade in her hand, fresh sap slowly dripping off the iron blade. Inspecting the blade, Astrid smiled as she noticed it was undamaged. That's Gronckle Iron for you, strongest material out there. A small frown spread across her face. Hiccup had crafted this blade. A gift for her sixteenth birthday.

She ran her index finger across the blade, wiping off any remaining sap. It had taken him an entire week to forge. And countless variations that she could only hope to comprehend. He had an entire journal with designs of the axe blade itself, with an entirely separate journal just for the handle.

The axe itself was made from Gronckle Iron with a light touch of gold that highlighted the Norse carving that covered the entire blade. Two dragons covered the blade, one a Deadly Nadder, the other a Night Fury. On the back of the Night Fury was a lone Viking, covered head to toe in what appeared to be armor, a helmet hiding his face. A Valkyrie sat astride the Nadder; long, braided hair flowing in the wind. She held up an axe, the very one Astrid had since she was a child, ready for battle.

On the hilt of the axe was carved an ancient Norse prayer, praying for protection in battle. Another prayer asked for the watchful eyes of Freya to bless the warrior that wielded this weapon. "He defiantly put a lot of work in that." Ruffnut said, now standing beside Astrid. Astrid merely nodded her head.

"Well we better hurry on back. Time for dinner and I don't know about you but I'm hungry." Ruffnut dusted off her clothes before preceding with the trek towards the Mead Hall. Astrid remained quiet, wiping the blade off one last time before following her sister in arms.

**\*\*THREE DAYS LATER\*\***

"Is there any word from them?"

"No Stoick. Their long over due. Varmutt sent another two messengers last night, they should have returned by now." Spitelout spoke, standing next to the Hairy Hooligans 'war table'. They had closed down the mead hall again today for another one of their meetings. The war table spanned two tables and represented a scale model of the Barbaric Archipelago. Tiny figurines littered the table representing: men, ships, capitals, resources, and important figures. Each one was colored in respect to the controlling tribe/nation. Berk's figurines were made of Gronckle Iron, representing Berks strength and durability.

"I don't like it Stoick. There's no reason for them to take so long." Gobber spoke, taking a drink of mead. Stoick rubbed his temple, gray hairs showing throughout his fiery red hair and beard. The burden of

running a powerful clan taking its toll on the aging viking.

Roman ships have been spotted near Hysteria and the Hysteric tribe is in arms about it. That's not what Stoick was worried about, two of Berk's riders happened to be there. 'Negotiations', that's what Gobber called the over the top yelling that usually transpired when two clans "talked", were going pretty well. The dragons in the area were to be relocated, in exchange the Hysterics would build a very special vessel for the Hooligans. One that any sane tribe would refuse. The two riders were to oversee the construction of the vessel. Hiccup and Gobber were actually due to check in. That was until the messages stopped.

"I say we send another two Terrors." Spitelout said. Folding his arms and leaning against a wooden pillar. Stoick shook his head.

"We can't afford to lose any more messengers. They're a blessing and should be used sparingly."

"There's plenty more where they came from Stoick!" Spitelout retorted.

"Aye. For now. But with all our trainers away we're stuck with what we got. So the answer is no. We have to assume they're intercepted. Gobber, prepare a ship with a rider. Dispatch them to Hysteria tonight." Gobber nodded his head and took one last gulp of his mead before refilling it.

"Is there any good news?" Stoick said, hoping for at least a ray of good in the onslaught of bad news. Spitelout looked over at Gobber, whom was usually the most up to date on domestic occurrences. Gobber hammered his stone tooth back in, having knocked it out while drinking. Thinking, his face lit up. "The Lava Louts are looking for a fight. Say it isn't fair we're riding dragons and that we took them all away from them before they could train them."

Stoick groaned. "I said good news Gobber."

"That is good news. We're vikings! Fighting is good!" Gobber said, hobbling towards the Viking chief.

"Not at the moment Gobber. With so much of our riders away it'll cost us dearly." Stoick said, examining the war table. It was true. Because the riders were so powerful, when they left Berk they had an individual figurine represent them. For most riders it was a monstrous nightmare with a rider. Only Hiccup and Stoick had their own personal figurines. The reason being one was the Chief and the other was heir and rode a Night Fury, the unholy offspring of lightning and death. The rest of the riders were represented by the Berkian Dragon Training Academy, which had its own model.

"We have twenty riders. Fifteen of them are not on Berk. Berk is in no condition for a war."

"We could always recall them Stoick. Plus everyone here is capable of fighting on dragon back." Spitelout said, walking to stand on the opposite side of the table.

"Capable yes, practical...not so much. We've all seen your riding skills Spitelout." Gobber said, taking another gulp of



mead.

"Gobber, send a message to the Lava Louts saying we're not looking for a fight. But any aggression taken against us will be met with extreme prejudice."

The doors for the Mead Hall opened abruptly as Astrid hurried in. "Astrid! What are you doing here lass. The Hall is closed." Stoick said, walking towards the panting viking.

"I'm sorry chief. But a message from the Bog-Burglars arrived." Astrid raised her hand and delivered a note to him. Stoick raised an eyebrow and opened it.

"Oh for the love of Thor! Astrid, you're dismissed." Nodding, Astrid ran towards the hall doors.

"What's up Stoick?" Gobber said, waiting for the news from the female tribe.

"Big Boobied Bertha wants to learn how to ride dragons. She's threatening cutting off our trade routes and aligning herself with the Lava Louts."

"With her fleet and their manpower we won't have a chance Stoick." Gobber said, examining the board for any tactical help.

"With dragons nothing will stop her though. We have a fighting chance Stoick as is. But the moment other clans start riding dragons we lose our leverage."

Stoick sighed heavily, he could feel the hairs on his beard greying. "Send a message to Hiccup updating him on all of today's events. Send a message to Big-Boobied Bertha and tell her we'll train only one of them and that only one of them may ride a dragon and that the knowledge of how to train a dragon remain a secret. Dismissed." With no further conversation Spitelout and Gobber left, leaving Stoick to ponder over the outcome of his discession.

**\*\*SIX DAYS AFTER HICCUPS DEPARTURE FROM BERK\*\***

"I heard it was as big as a death." Tuffnut said, slouching against a building. It had been relatively boring at Berk with Hiccup gone. Astrid had taken over training, which was the worse part of it all. All the teens did now were practice all day. "No way. I heard it was bigger than a death." Snotlout said, poking the ground with a stick.

"Whats bigger than a death?" Astrid asked, walking towards the pair. Ruffnut was close behind as she sat next to her brother.

"The new dragon species in Scotland." Tuffnut said, picking his teeth. Astrid's face fell. "'It's bigger than a death? What in Odin's name has Hiccup got himself into!?'"

"Ya. Heard Hiccup was also introduced to a Princess." Snotlout said, nudging Tuffnut and chuckling.

"Ya, suppose to be quite the woman. 'Like nothing you'd ever suspect' I heard someone say." Tuffnut said, chuckling with Snotlout. Astrid's

face turned a shade of red as she clenched her fists. Ruffnut was immediately on her feet and standing away from the hormonal men.

"Ya, I mean \_come on\_, the guys a Viking legend. He's probably fighting off the ladies. Being single and all. Speaking of single." Snotlout stood and approached Astrid. "How would you like to join me at the academy. You can totally watch me show off my muscles." At this Snotlout flexed his biceps. Astrid grabbed his wrist and twisted.

"Make one more advance on me and I \_will\_ break your arm Snot. As for youâ€¦" She turned her glare towards Tuffnut, who happened to have froze with his hand still picking his teeth. "Say one more lude thing about this \_Princess\_ and you'll pay for it. Understood?" Tuffnut nodded his head. Satisfied, Astrid released Snotlout and left.

Ruffnut was quick to follow as they walked together. The sun was already setting and most Viking's were off to bed. Walking past the Haddock house, Astrid noticed Stoick enter the grand house. "Well I'll talk to you later." Ruffnut said as they passed her house.

"Ya. See you tomorrow." Astrid said, her mind pondering over the days events. Could she really be so easily replaced? Does five years yield no loyalty? She shook away the infectious thoughts. When he returned they'll have a nice long chat and work everything out. Astrid blinked in surprise. She didn't notice but she was already in her room. Too tired to change, she simply kicked off her boots and plopped down on the wooden bed, ready for sleep to overtake her.

Astrid awoke with a start. A loud war horn was blaring throughout the village. Experience from years of dragon raids had her body working in auto pilot. Her boots were on and she was out the door before her brain even registered she was awake. Scanning the skies, she took note of the lack of dragons. The village was actually pretty peaceful. If one didn't hear the war horn most would see it as an average night, except for the large crowd at the Haddock house.

She didn't even notice the growing crowd. Knowing something was wrong, she ran towards the Chiefs house. Pushing through the crowd, Astrid found herself standing in front of two kneeling figures. Stoick loomed over them, glaring angrily at them. "Who sent ye!" Stoick boomed, pacing back and forth. The two figures remained quiet. Noticing Gobber standing beside her, Astrid nudged him. "What's happening Gobber?" Gobber looked down towards Astrid and frowned. "There was an assassination attempt on Stoick. Thankfully Stoick proved too much for them." Astrid glared towards the assassins. The entire village looked like they were out for blood.

"Stoick!" Spitelout called, pulling out a note from one of the assassins bags. Stock aggressively grabbed the note and read it. Hoping for any clues as to determine the identity of the assassins. What he found made his heart clench. "You weren't after me were youâ€¦" Stoick said softly. The crowd of Vikings began murmuring amongst each other. Astrid felt her pulse pick up. There was only one other person that lived in that house. "You were after Hiccup weren't you?" Stoick said, balling his fist and crumbling the note.

"We may have failed, but our employers won't stop until he and that

demon he rides are dead." One assassin spoke.

"Who's your employer?" Spitelout asked, the crowd enraged by the threat against their hero and heir.

"You'll know in due time." The other spoke.

"What does that mean?" Stoick said, stepping towards the cynical assassins. The moment he stopped though, both assassins put a small pill in their mouths.

"Poison!" Gobber called, immediately trying to make them spit it out. His efforts were in vain though, as both assassins laid dead before them.

"What are we going to do Stoick?" Gobber said, pushing one of the bodies over with his wooden leg. Stoicks looked around the crowd, each willing to do whatever it takes to protect Hiccup. His gaze landed on Astrid though. No words were exchanged, but she knew what she had to do. Without missing a beat, Astrid turned and ran towards Stormfly. Hoping to protect the most important person Berk and herself have ever known.

**\*\*Uh-oh. Looks like Ailbert isn't the only thing Hiccup has to worry about. Who are these mysterious employers? Leave your thoughts in a response. THANKS FOR READING!\*\***

## 16. Chapter 16

**\*\*A/N\*\***

**\*\*I'm so sorry for the wait. Life has been hell lately. Finally got this chapter done. Hope you all enjoy it.\*\***

**\*\*R&R!\*\***

## Chapter 16

### The Berkian Bodyguard

She couldn't understand why everything was so quiet. A few short minutes ago the courtyard was a yelling match between scotsmen and dragon. The roars and yells could have easily been heard at the forest edge. No everything was deathly quiet. Did something happen? Was Hiccup ok? Did he already train the dragon? That thought made a swell of anger pool in her stomach. How could she miss an opportunity like this?! It was a once in a lifetime opportunity! Seeing the Berkian heir train a Monstrous Nightmare right in front of her!

She saw a crowd of Scotsmen surrounding what she could guess was the Nightmare. She immediately began pushing her way through the crowd. She had to know what was happening. After shoving past the few remaining scotsmen she burst out in front and encountered a sight she wasn't expecting. There, kneeling next to the Monstrous Nightmare, was Hiccup, with a sword to his neck. The culprit, Ailbert Macintosh. Merida took a step forward but stopped abruptly when she noticed a blade was pressed to Albert's neck.

Merida realized it was a young woman that held the blade to the lords neck. Blonde, braided hair cascaded down her back as she glared daggers at Ailbert. The blade scratched at his neck causing a small pool of blood to form on the tip of the blade.

"Hello Hiccup."

"Hi Astrid."

Astrid. She heard that name somewhere. By her attire she was obviously a viking, so she must of heard about this Astrid from Hiccup. Regaining her senses, Merida stepped up to stand in front of the trio. Spotting the fiery red haired girl, Astrid drew her hatchet and pointed it towards Merida; not once taking her eyes off of Ailbert. "Don't take another step closer." Astrid hissed.

"Ailbert. What in the name of Brigantia are you doing?" Merida spoke, unwavering by the weapon pointing towards her.

Ailbert looked over at Merida, before returning to stare at Hiccup. "He was planning on letting this \_monster \_lose."

"Ailbert, by all thats holy. Drop your sword this instant!" Meridas words cracked like a whip amongst the Scots. Ailbert dropped his sword completely, his hand recoiling as if it was just whipped. Though the blade to Hiccups throat may have been removed, Astrid blade remained on Ailbert's neck. Hiccup quickly stood and backed up from the scene, gaining some much needed space. His hand instinctively went to his throat, rubbing it and checking for damage.

Meridas eyes traveled to Astrid. Her body was tense and jumpy, years of experience with Angus taught her to pick up the signs of an animal in distress; and Astrid was definitely in distress. Noticing this too, Hiccup approached Astrid. "Come on Astrid. Let him go."

Upon Hiccups order, Astrid returned the hatchet to her belt and lowered her war axe. Fergus pushed his way through the crowded, followed by an off balance Cambel; still adjusting to his newly acquired prosthetic. Courtesy of hiccup. "What's going on here?" Ferguson eyes widened for a second when he saw the unfamiliar Viking. Merida turned to face her father. "Ailbert here had his blade to Hiccups neck." The Scottish lords face paled as Fergus face turned red with anger.

"He WHAT?"

"Your majesty! He-he was trying to free the dragon!" Ailbert cried out. Hoping to lessen any punishment that may come his way. Fergus glare turned to Hiccup, expecting a reasonable answer. Unwavering, Hiccup stepped forward and placed a gentle hand on the Monstrous Nightmares snout. "He won't harm anybody. He's not ridable yet, but I think letting him out would help earn his trust."

"You \_think. \_Your majesty! This poor excuse of a \_viking \_should-" Ailbert words were cut off as Astrids axe pressed against his throat once again.

"You're \_really\_ starting to annoy me."

Fergus instinctively placed his hand on the hilt of his sword. Ready to retaliate if the young valkyria was to slay the lord. "Astrid." Hiccup hissed, warning the young lady to back off. Reluctantly, she did. Hiccup knew he would be paying for her cooperation latter. It was actually pretty surprising seeing Astrid cooperate without much of a fuss. Fergus hand relaxed as he eyed her. "Ailbert, go to the hall. I'll deal with you later." Ailbert reluctantly left, not wanting to anger the King. Cambel stared at Ailbert with distaste as he left. Watching him leave, Fergus returned his gaze towards the trio in front of him. "Who are ye?" Fergus asked, Merida having the same question in mind.

Hiccup opened his mouth to speak, but was beat to it by Astrid. "My name is Astrid Hofferson of Berk. I'm a dragon rider. I'm here to assist Hiccup with the dragon problem in Scotland." It was mostly true. For all she cared Scotland could burn, but she wouldn't tell them the real reason. Hiccup had a bounty on his head. One that many people would be willing to claim. Fergus looked over at Hiccup. "I thought ye said that a man by the name of 'Fishlegs' or something would assist ye?"

Once again, Astrid bet him to the punch. "Change of plans." Fergus raised an eyebrow and looked between the two. "Alright. Follow me lass. Have to introduce ya to the Queen then." Nodding her head, Astrid motioned to follow but glanced back at Hiccup.

"Lets go Hiccup."

"But what about the dragon?"

"It'll be here when we return."

\_'And she's back.'\_ Knowing that arguing with her was futile, Hiccup sighed and followed her. "Hey Hiccup." A whisper came from his side. Nearly jumping out of his skin, he turned to see Merida just barely brushing her shoulder against his.

"Ye-"

"Quiet." Merida whispered, looking ahead to see if Astrid had noticed their private conversation. If she had she made no sign of it. Hiccup leaned down slightly to her Merida better.

"Yes?" Hiccup whispered.

"What's the deal between you two?" A light blush came across Hiccups cheeks.

"What do you mean?"

"Not everyone would risk execution to save someone." Merida pointed out, noticing the light tinge of pink on Hiccups cheeks.

"Well maybe she would because I'm the Berkian heir?"

Merida shook her head. "That fire in her eyes was far more than that then simple duty." Something clicked inside of Hiccups head.

"It wasn't what you think."

"And why not?"

"Because me and her aren't together anymore?" Merida raised an eyebrow, surprised at the double confession. One being that they did date, the other being that they no longer were.

"And why is that?" Hiccup was silent for a moment before speaking.

"I came to Scotland." Surprised, Merida stopped and stared at Hiccup. Regaining her composure, Merida caught up to Hiccup.

"What's that have to do with anything?" Hiccup slowed down his pace. By the look in his face Merida could tell he was debating something. Finding his answer, Hiccup leaned down to whisper in her ear, not wanting to Astrid to hear.

"Hurry up Hiccup." Astrid said, entering the throne room. Hiccup recoiled from Merida.

"I'll be right there!" He leaned down towards Merida again. "I'll tell you later. As for now, let's get this over with." Merida nodded her head in agreement and followed him into the throne room. Astrid stood in front of Queen Elinor, who showed interest in the young lady. "You from Berk you say? What happened to the other dragon rider that was supposed to come?"

"There was a change of plans your highness." Astrid said, her monotone voice having an edge of venom.

"What occurred to have these plans change?" Elinor asked.

"It was learned that Fishlegs' dragon, a Gronckle by the name of 'Meatlug' didn't have the endurance to travel here from Berk. It was decided, then, that I would go." Hiccup glanced slightly at Astrid, his mind pondering over what she said. Gronckles reportedly had a strong endurance, they just lacked speed. So technically Meatlug should be able to make it to Scotland, just not exactly in a timely manner. Astrid knows this, heck, her and Fishlegs are the ones that discovered this. So why was she lying?

Elinor eyed Astrid for a few. Judging her body language to see if she was lying. Even if she could tell she wouldn't do anything of it. Hiccup had proven his worth, if he trusted her then so did they. After another moment, Elinor nodded her head. "Alright then. Maudie." Maudie bustled in at the call of her name. "Prepare a room for our guest." Maudie nodded her head and turned to leave before Astrid spoke up.

"If it wouldn't inconvenience you your majesty. I request a room besides Hiccup." Elinor raised an eyebrow at the suggestion.

"This is strictly for protective reasons. I don't want a repeat of early events." Astrid's glare turned towards Ailbert, who stood a few feet away. He glared back, but shrunk when Astrid tapped her fingers against her hatchet.

Elinor nodded her head. "Alright. Maudie, prepare a room next to Hiccup's." Nodding her head again, the maid turned and left.

"If you'd excuse us your majesty. I'd like to retrieve my dragon before nightfall." Astrid spoke.

"Of course, we'll see you at dinner then."

"Come on Hiccup."

"Why don't you just call her-OUCH!" Astrid foot stepped onto Hiccups. She glared at him before turning to walk out the door. "Come on Hiccup." She said, not slowing in her stride. Hiccup grumbled slightly. Exiting the door, Hiccup spoke. "What was that about?"

"We need to talk." She spoke, her voice barely audible. A chill ran down Hiccups back. He wasn't looking forward to this conversation.

\*\*So, how was it?\*\*

## 17. Chapter 17

\*\*A/N\*\*

\*\*Hello all! Finally finished this chapter. Sorry it took so long. I really am trying to get theses chapters done as fast as I can while trying to improve the quality of every chapter. Giant juggling act (btw I cant juggle so ya...). I understand some, if not most, of you were upset at Astrid for lying to the Queen. Hopefully this chapter gives you some insight into her thought process. Hope you all enjoy this chapter!\*\*

\*\*R&R!\*\*

## Chapter 17

### Not Alone

"Astrid, what was that all about?" Hiccup spoke once they entered the tree line. Astrid looked around, checking for anyone that may be eavesdropping. Seeing none, she motioned for Hiccup to continue following her. "There was an attack on Berk yesterday." Hiccups eyes shot open.

"What?!" He croaked, his voice cracking. "Is everyone ok? Who was it? How bad is the damage?" Astrid sighed.

"Everyone is fine, sorta." She mumbled the last part. "We don't know as of yet who it was. Possibly the Lava Louts, but we can't exclude the Romans either. And there was no damage." Hiccup stopped, something quickly clicking into his head and questions forming.

"Wait what? How do you not know? And doesn't damage usually coincide with a raid?"

"It wasn't a raid."

"What? Then what wa-"

"It was an assassination attempt. Stoick caught them in your house."

Hiccups eyes shot open. Panic regripping him.

"Assassination? Is he ok? How many were there?" Astrid raised her hand, signaling him to quiet down.

"Chief Stoick is fine. There was two of them and they weren't after him." Hiccup raised a confused eyebrow.

"But if they weren't after him then who-"

"Hiccup. Really? Who else lives there." Hiccup closed his mouth, his lips bulging from a built up response.

"How did the questioning go?"

"They took poison and both died."

"Oh."

"Ya. Oh."

"That...uh...doesn't explain you lying to the Queen." Hiccup mumbled. This news had seriously dulled his mood, if that was possible. Having a blade pressed against your throat and having a vengeful girlfriend show up doesn't exactly brighten ones day. Ex...ex-girlfriend. A vengeful ex-girlfriend. Defiantly doesn't set up for a good day. "I had to have an excuse to show up. Seeing as you already told them who was suppose to help you." Astrid says, stepping over a rather tall root. Hiccup stumbles after her, his prosthetic catching in protest before freeing itself. "Why couldn't you just tell them the truth?" Astrid again sighs.

"Information travels fast Hiccup. When, not if, word gets out you're in Scotland these \_'employers'\_ that want you dead will be quick to act. If they can get to you in the heart of the clan, being miles away won't help. The best we can do is limit the number of people that know theres a bounty on your head. Telling the entire kingdom of Dunbroch this won't exactly \_help\_ now, would it?"

"I guess you're right." Hiccup sighed, not comfortable with lying to their Highnesses, especially Merida. The pair broke into a small clearing where a bright blue Deadly Nadder laid, sunning herself. The dragon looked over at the pair and quickly stood. Rushing towards Hiccup it nuzzled its large head against the young man, purring and chirping as it did so. "Hey Stormfly. I missed you too girl." Hiccup cooed, rubbing the nadder on her neck.

"Astrid?" Hiccup spoke softly, looking over at the young woman. Her arms were closed as she watched the pair.

"Yes."

"I got a request."

"What is it?"

"If your going to be protecting me. You're going to have to be around Merida. I don't want any confrontation between you two." Astrids eyes narrowed.



"And why is that?"

"Merida and I have gotten close over the last few days. I consider her a friend Astrid." Astrid's body tensed as she stared angrily at Hiccup.

"Hiccup how could you-"

"There's no debating it Astrid." Astrid's back straightened.

"Fine. You two are \_acquaintances.\_"

"You two are a lot alike Astrid. There's a strong possibility you two could become best friends."

"Hiccup. You know my quarrel against the Scottish."

"You're right. I do. But as far as I'm concerned there will be no hostile actions or remarks on your part towards the Scottish."

"Bu-"

"\_That\_, Astrid, is an order by your heir. If you hold the same respect to me as you do to your father, you'd honor my command." Astrid stood tall, back straight and chest out. Just like her father taught her.

"Of course."

Hiccup visibly relaxed. "Good. Let's go back to the castle before they start missing us." Astrid blew the bangs out of her eye.

"Ya. That's the last thing I want. The Scottish missing us."

"Astrid-"

"No hostile remarks. Got it." Hiccup smirked as he led the way back to the castle. Unbeknownst to the trio a pair of red eyes followed them.

It seems like all her practice at hunting had been paying off lately. Merida had remained a few paces away from the trio. Her green gown disguising herself in the foliage. For once she was thankful for the hair band that hid her hair from sight. Without it she would have been discovered long ago. She saw Hiccup say something, but it was in a whisper and just out of hearing range. Luckily they were walking towards her so she could hear the response Astrid gave. "There was an attack on Berk." Merida's heart clutched. '\_An attack? Who would dare attack Berk? With their dragons they could repel any attack. Who would be dumb enough to fight an unwinnable battle?\_'

"It was an assassination attempt. Stoick caught them in your house." This brought Merida out of her inner thoughts. She had been too preoccupied with her own thought to realize the conversation had continued. Merida knew that Stoick was Chief of the Hairy Hooligans and just so happened to be Hiccup's father. She could only imagine the torment going through Hiccup's mind at this moment. If something like this happened to her she-

"Chief Stoick is fine. There was two of them and they weren't after him." Astrid spoke. From here she could pick up a hint of worry in her voice. By the way she walked Merida could see she was very protective. She continuously glanced back towards Hiccup and any unnatural noise quickly drew her attention.

They were now passing her as Meridas thoughts swirled in a maelstrom of worry.

"But if they weren't after him then who-"

"Hiccup. Really? Who else lives there." Merida felt like her head was floating. Who would want Hiccup dead? Why would Astrid keep this a secret? They could help with the security to Hiccup. With all he's done its the least the could do.

"That...uh...doesn't explain you lying to the Queen." Meridas head perked up slightly at this, straining to hear them more. A few more seconds and they would be out of hearing range. Merida got up slowly and began to follow them, keeping a careful eye on where she stepped.

"I had to have an excuse to show up. Seeing as you already told them who was suppose to help you."

"Why couldn't you just tell them the truth?" Merida could just barely hear an exasperated sigh from Astrid.

"Information travels fast Hiccup. When, not if, word gets out you're in Scotland these \_'employers'\_ that want you dead will be quick to act. If they can get to you in the heart of the clan, being miles away won't help. The best we can do is limit the number of people that know theres a bounty on your head. Telling the entire kingdom of Dunbroch this won't exactly \_help\_ this would it?"

The duo were now beyond Meridas hearing and proceeding any further would heighten the chance of getting caught. She had heard more than what she planned on. As quiet as a mouse, Merida turned around and returned to the castle. Wondering what she should do with this newly acquired information. Ailbert Macintosh watched her leave, having been spying on them also. A small smile spread across his lips. Unlike Merida, Ailbert knew \_exactly\_ what to do.

Astrid, Hiccup, and Stormfly arrived back at the castle a few moments later. Both relieved that their 'alone time' wasn't as awkward as either of them predicted. Hiccups gaze remained fixed on the ground in front of him. His mind racing around with the information of the assassination attempt. Berk had plenty of enemies, but in recent years their numbers declined significantly. Picking a fight with the Hairy Hooligans was signing \_and\_ \_printing\_ your tribes death certificate. So who would do such a thing? The most logical choice would be the Lava Louts. But assassination just doesn't suit them. Their more the 'barge in and kill on sight" type of vikings. Not the "silent killers" type. The only tribe known for that would be the hysterics. Who would smother their own mother if you gave them the right motive. That left the Romans. The Roman Empire was notorious for their use of assassins. But why? The barbaric archipelago was a wasteland compared to the rest of Europe, so an invasion seemed illogical. Maybe they were trying to stop the viking raids? Again,

that didn't fit. Any major commercial fleets were escorted by the Roman fleet and Viking raiding parties were extra sure to stay clear of those. Plus with the dragon raids ending the need for raids has drastically reduced. Instead of being short on the bare necessities, Vikings were finally able to live with a small amount of luxury in their lives.

A large black scaled head slammed into Hiccups chest, sending him sprawling onto his back. "OOPPHH!" Hiccups head slammed into the soft grass as a slimy tongue licked his face. "UGH! Toothless! Come on! You know this doesn't wash out!" Toothless wasn't paying any heed to his disgruntled rider. Instead, Toothless intensified his licks. "EUGH! Toothless! Down boy! \_Down!\_" Astrid smiled as she looked down at the pair. She wouldn't admit it to anyone, but she missed the duo.

"Whats going on here?" Turning her head, she spotted Merida approaching them. A small giggle escaped Meridas mouth once she spotted Toothless and Hiccup.

The smile on Astrids face dissipated at the sight of her, but Hiccup asked for her to behave; and behave she would. "Overprotective dragon. Toothless is the worse of them all." Merida smiled over at Astrid before turning her gaze back towards Hiccup and Toothless. Hiccup had managed to wrestle his arms free and was desperately trying to push Toothless's head away. Finding no other alternative, Hiccup began scratching the corner of his jaw. The Night Fury arched his neck in delight before falling over limp. Hiccup grunted in exertion, but just managed to pry his body free from Toothless.

Standing, he realized he was \_covered\_ in saliva. "Eewwww. This is definitely \_not\_ coming off anytime soon." As he said this, he attempted to shake some off his hand only for it to slowly drip down. Shaking more violently, the slime like saliva stretched downward, but did not detach itself from Hiccups arm. Hiccup looked up to see Merida hunched over laughing and snorting away. Astrid was smiling and trying her best not to laugh, her hand covering her mouth as a small giggle escaped. Hiccups face turned red from embarrassment as he tried to fling more off. "Very funny. Ha. Ha. Ha. Now if you don't mind I'm going to go change before this stains."

"At least you're armors going to be sleek. Probably speed you up." Astrid said, a smile now formed on her mouth.

"Then you try it. Because this is definitely not worth any speed I gain. Dear Odin it smells worse than your herbal healing mixâ€¦!" Hiccup grumbled, voice barely audible. Unfortunately, it was loud enough for Astrid to hear.

>"What was that?" Hiccups back straightened and his body froze.<p>

"Oh! Nothing!"

"Pretty sure I heard something."

"Naaaah." Hiccup said, waving his hand dismissively.

"Are you insulting my hearing?"

"I didn't say that!"

"You're implying it."

"Am not!" Hiccup stumbled as he took a step back, wincing as his still fractured stump stepped wrong. The pain medicine must be wearing off now because the numbness there is rapidly fading. Noticing this, Astrid looked down at his leg. "What happened?"

"Fractured a bone in a fight with the Mjolnir." Astrid's eyebrow rose.

"Mjolnir?"

"Yes. The Mjolnir. It's been terrorizing our lands for months now. Hiccup named it." Merida spoke, having stopped laughing and watched the exchange between the two Vikings. Astrid looked from her to Hiccup. "How'd you capture it?" Hiccup chuckled while rubbing the back of his neck.

"I sorta...hit him with a pouch of your herbal healing mix."

"Oh, and it worked?"

"Like a charm. Is it true you knocked the entire village out with that stuff?" Merida asked curiously. A light blush spread across Astrid's cheeks as she remembered that embarrassing catastrophe.

"It wasn't my fault! Everything else I've made worked out fine."

"Your zero for three Astrid." Hiccup says flatly.

"Three?" Merida asks, only knowing of the one.

"Yes. Three. One was yak nog-"

"-you said you loved it!" Astrid interrupted.

"-posin in a mug was what I said. And everyone in the village could agree with me on that one. Two was the healing mix. And the third shall never be mentioned ever again." Hiccup said, pointing a finger at Astrid. Astrid quickly recognized what it was and began to laugh.

"Oh come on Hiccup! Now that one was funny."

"It lasted a month Astrid. I thought it was never coming off!"

Merida giggled at Hiccup's exasperated expression. "What did you do Astrid?" She asked cautiously. Astrid looked over at her. She wanted to say nothing, but Odin she did, but Hiccup said she had to be nice and saying no isn't really nice now is it? A mischievous smirk appeared on her lips. "There's this sport back home called 'The Dragon Races'. There's a series of events revolving around the war and eventual peace with dragons. The main custom of the games is to be colored in paint representing your team. Because Toothless travels so fast and is notorious for diving in and out of the water, Hiccup's

paint tends to come off. So to help out I made a mixture that was supposed to last longer."

"And last longer it did." Hiccup mutters.

"So I created this paint to be red. Well the games end and Hiccup goes to wash this all off. After several hours none of us have seen him. When I find him he has a lesser tone of red on him. It turns out that the red in the paint washed out, but it left pink all over him and his armor. For an entire month Hiccup was left to fly around in pink and black armor."

Merida began to giggle again at Hiccups expense. "Yep. Very emasculating when you're flying around on the most powerful dragon known to Viking kind in pink armor. Thank you so much for that experience Astrid. Now, I'm going to change." And with that, Hiccup left the girls by themselves. Normally Hiccup would be concerned with leaving Astrid by herself with a Scot, but something told him that Merida could handle herself if anything did take place.

Hiccup rounded the castle corner and took no more than three steps before a growl stopped him dead in his tracks. He was now face to face with a Mjolnir.

\*\*Uh-oh. What did you all think? What's going to happen to our young hero now?\*\*

## 18. Chapter 18

\*\*A/N\*\*

\*\*Giant sigh of relief\*\*

\*\*Wow. This took a lot out of me. I'll be honest. This chapter was just about ready on Tuesday. Then my internet went to hell. I do nearly all my writing on Google Docs. Having internet take nearly half-hour to load up a single page put me in a pretty foul mood. So for the last few days I was unable to finish this chapter. I would have started over, but that would have been pointless if i couldn't upload the story. So the waiting game it was. Thats not necessarily a bad thing though. It gave me some time to think and revamp this chapter. I hope you enjoy it!

><strong>

\*\*R&R!\*\*

## Chapter 18

Back to Square one

Weightlessnessâ€¦.yesâ€¦.that's how he would describe his current condition. \_What\_ was his condition was a more intriguing question. Hiccup felt like he had just woken from a long, restless nap. His brain was foggy and the usually inquisitive nature of his brain was dulled to the point of basic knowledge. It was dark, that was a given from the lack of visible objects. His throat was parched and he could feel his stomach grumble. He reached out to touch it, but realized the sensation in his arms were gone. He tried moving his legs but got the same result. \_'Where am I?\_' Hiccup thought, his brain rummaging

about to explain his condition. He remembers giggling. Meridas giggling. He could just faintly remember hearing another female's voice. Astrids voice.

'\_So I created this paint to be red. Well the games end and Hiccup goes to wash this all off. After several hours none of us have seen him. When I find him he has a lesser tone of red on him. It turns out that the red in the paint washed out, but it left pink all over him and his armor. For an entire month Hiccup was left to fly around in pink and black armor.'\_

Yep, his first memory had to be that embarrassing experience. So he remembers that, but what happened \_after \_that. A pair of burning red eyes pierced his consciousness. \_'Mjolnir.'\_ His body was screaming at him to move, to run. He remembers staring into those blood red eyes. \_'Did I die? Is this what death feels like?'\_ Too many questions. He could feel his body pulling his mind back to sleep. He tried to fight back. Challenging his mind to stay awake; to prolong the inevitable submission of his mind to the surrounding darkness. His mind never had a chance and slipped back into the void.

His eyes slowly opened, light blinding him and forcing his eyes to close once more. Voices, he could hear voices. His eyes opened again, this time he was greeted by a pair of blue eyes. His mind was quick to pick up the visual images now flooding his brain. Red hair covered either side of a freckled face. His brain put a name to that face after his lips had already spoke it. "Merida?" The red headed princess smiled widely. "You're awake!" She was abruptly shoved aside by a black dragon who immediately started licking the barely conscious viking.

"Oy! You scaly lizard get off em!" Merida reprimanded, attempting and surprisingly succeeding at pushing Toothless away from Hiccup.

After insuring that Toothless would remain in his side of the room, Merida turned to face Hiccup. "Ugh. We had just gotten you cleaned up too."

"How long was I out?" Hiccup spoke, attempting to sit up. He winced as his head was bombarded with waves of pain. Merida quickly pushed him back down onto the bed. "Lay down and don't get up. You took a nasty hit." Hiccup nodded his head in understanding, allowing his body to relax.

"You were out for three days."

"THREE DAYS?!" Hiccup screeched, bolting up and instantly regretting it as his entire body screamed in protest. Merida instantly shoved him back down to prevent anymore self inflicted damage.

"I told ya to lay down!" Merida hissed, trying to wipe off the saliva that Toothless left behind. Hiccup grumbled a reply before settling back down.

"What exactly happened?" Hiccup asked as Merida wiped his face with a rag. Merida sighed and set the rag aside, satisfied with her work. "It all started the moment you stepped out of sightâ€¦|."

\*\*THREE DAYS AGOâ€¦|\*\*

"Yep. Very emasculating when you're flying around on the most powerful dragon known to Viking kind in pink armor. Thank you so much for that experience Astrid. Now, I'm going to change." Merida and Astrid watched as Hiccup turned around walked towards the Castles; rounding a corner he was out of sight. The air took on a different atmosphere once the two females made eye contact. Though it wasn't as nearly as hostile as it was before, the body language Astrid displayed clearly showed that she didn't trust Merida. "I want to make one thing clear Princess," Astrid spoke, her voice absent of any emotion, "I don't trust you. Its nothing personal, but I don't trust you and your people. But because you're close to Hiccup, I'll give you a chance. One chance."

"Why is that?" Astrid seemed to stiffen at the the question before an angry glare was cast at her. Before she could speak, Merida spoke up. "I understand if its personal and you don't want to talk about it, but I think I have a right to know why you're so angry at us." Merida said, placing her hands on her hips. Astrids eyes narrowed as she placed her hands on her hips.

"You have no right to know \_anything \_about me!" Astrid snapped. A loud roar and blast of fire interrupted any further arguments.

Looking behind them, both Viking and Scot were astonished to see a wall of fire sweep towards them. Before either of them could react a large bluish yellow cocoon engulfed them. Merida looked up and was astonished to see a Deadly Nadder head looking down at the duo. "Good girl stormfly." Astrid said as the Nadder released them. The ground around them was scorched black but the area they stood on was preserved.

A handful of Scottish soldiers came running past them, oblivious to their presence. A large dragon swooped down and sprayed fire down towards them, luckily most of them got out of the way unscaved. One unfortunately had his kilt set ablaze. On any other occasion Merida, and most likely Astrid, would be laughing at such an event, but now was not the time. By the shape and color of the dragon Merida instantly identified it. "Its a Mjolnir, but it should be locked away!"

"Well either it escaped or there's more than one." Astrid spoke, already on Stormfly's back when Merida turned around.

Without permission, Merida climbed on Stormfly's back too. "What are you doing?" Astrid spoke, surprised by the bold move of the princess.

"Helping of course. I got Gronckle Iron arrows just for this occasion."

"Gronckle Iron arrows?"

"Ya. Hiccup made them so I could defend myself and help him out." Astrid rolled her eyes at that.

"Alright fine. But I'm not playing babysitter if you get in trouble."

"Won't have too." Merida spoke confidently. Astrid smirked at this.

She had to admit, maybe Hiccup was right about them having a lot in common. Without any further thought, Astrid gave the signal and Stormfly leapt up into the night sky.

Flying over the cage the Mjolnir was restrained in, Astrid and Merida were horrified to see at least two Mjolnirs there smashing open the cage with their club like tail. It only take a few swings before the third Mjolnir was freed. Fire erupted beside them and Astrid instinctively rolled Stormfly over to escape the inferno. Looking back at where they were their stomachs sunk to reveal a fourth Mjolnir. One of the Mjolnirs dived towards a group of guards, quickly dispersing them as they ran for cover. Astrid looked to the right to spot a fifth Mjolnir spraying fire at the castle gates, preventing any reinforcements from repelling the 'rescue mission'.

A chill ran down Astrids back. Dragons were loyal creatures, but to launch a rescue mission of this level, it just wasn't in there nature. Fire sprayed at them once again, forcing them further away from the actual fighting. Stormfly unleashed a barrage of tail spikes, only for them to be swept away by a quick swipe of the Mjolnirs tail. Merida unleashed an arrow at the dragon only for it to quickly duck and attack from below, away from Meridas dangerous arrows. Astrid directed Stormfly to roll and pick up speed, hoping to put some distance between the two warring dragons. Instead of giving chase, the dragon pulled back and returned to help its comrades.

Astrid raised a curious brow, half expecting for the dragon to chase them down. "What are ye waiting for? Lets go get it!" Merida said, notching an arrow for the upcoming fight. Astrid shook her head in disagreement.

"If one of these things can take on Hiccup and Toothless and win, theres no way we could take on five of them." Merida perked up at the mention of Hiccup and Toothless.

"Oy! Where are they?" This immediately got Astrids attention, having momentarily forgot about the pair in her adrenaline fueled state. Quickly scanning the area, her eyes were abruptly attracted to a flash of purple. Sensing her ridder tense, Stormfly looked over to witness a second flash of purple. Both instantly knew what it belonged to. "Found them. Stormfly, down." Astrid spoke. Merida looked over to witness another two flashes of purple, realizing that it was Toothless signature fire.

"What's happening?" Merida spoke, trying to get a better view of the sporadic flares of purple. Astrid peered over and gasped in horror. There, surrounded by three Mjolnir's, was Toothless; desperately trying to hold off any of them from approaching him and his friend, Hiccup. Who laid unconscious beneath the surrounded NightFury.

Toothless was crouched over Hiccup as close as he could manage to his frail form. He shot another plasma blast at the closest Mjolnir, who backed up and shielded itself with its tail. Growling, the Mjolnir began creeping forward once again. A blast of red hot fire rained down on two of the Mjolnirs. Forcing them away from Toothless and the still unconscious Hiccup. Looking up, Toothless was pleased to see Stormfly, Astrid, and Merida flying over head providing aerial support.



Merida notched an arrow and released, striking a Mjolnir right in its shoulders. Roaring in pain, the Mjolnir lept into the sky and after the trio. Stormfly skillfully rolled away from the attacking Mjolnir, forcing the speeding dragon to overshoot its intended target. Unfazed by the abrupt roll, Merida released another arrow; this one sinking to the foot of the Mjolnir closest to Toothless. Crying out in pain, it had no time to react as Toothless placed a perfect plasma blast into its face. It growled and fired a wave of fire towards Toothless. Unable to dodge without exposing Hiccup, Toothless was forced to take the brunt of the flames.

Toothless head looked up once the flames stopped, wondering why the Mjolnir didn't continue until he was burnt to a crisp. Its ears were swiveling back and forth as it listened intently to something. Its head turned back to the forest before returning to glare at Toothless. It released a series of grunts and growls before flying towards the forest, the rest of the Mjoliners right behind it.

Landing, Merida was the first one off of Stormfly as her and Astrid raced towards Hiccup. Astrid quickly pressed a finger to his neck and sighed. "He's alive. One of the Mjolnirs most likely got the drop on him." Astrid spoke, moving to examine Toothless. Some of the bandages on his body were burned and would need replacing before an infection took hold. "What was all that about?" Merida spook, scanning around to insure no other Mjolnirs were waiting for a second attack." Astrid stood up from her kneeling position and brushed a piece of hair out her face, only for it to return with a few dozen friends. Ignoring it, she spoke. "It was a rescue mission. A level of which I've only seen once before."

"Where?"

"A dragon called the screaming death. It held some type of hierarchy with the whispering deaths. When we wounded it the whispering deaths fought us off and nurtured it back to health."

"How'd you stop it?"

"We didn't."

"So you're still fighting it?"

"No, it stopped attacking us after awhile. Hiccup went out to figure out why, but we never saw it again."

"So it just, vanished?"

"Yep, and Odin help who ever found it."

\*\*PRESENTâ€|.\*\*

"So wheres Astrid now?" Hiccup spoke, now comfortable enough to sit up with his back against the headboard. He had on a green tunic that resembled the one he wore as a child, though this one was much bigger. "She's out on patrol. Left a little over half an hour ago." Merida spoke, now sitting on the edge of the bed.

"Has there been any other sightings of them?" Hiccup spoke,

subconsciously rubbing his bruised stomach. Merida shook her head no.

"It's been awfully quiet since the attack. Ma and Da are getting weary of another attack."

"Then I better get out there and start searching." Hiccup moved to get up before Merida stopped him.

"Not so fast Hiccup. The healer said no flying until those bruises heal."

"But I have to-"

"Instead of flying, you'll be joining me for my lessons."

"Lessons?"

"Yes. My princess lessons."

"If you haven't noticed Merida, I'm not a princess."

"Of course I've noticed! You are a prince though aren't ye?"

"Well...Vikings don't really associate the term 'heir' and 'princess' together-" Merida shot a glare at him to get to the point. "-but i guess you're right."

Merida smiled. "Good. Now lets get a move on it." And with that she was out the door.

"Why do I have the feeling todays going to be a long dayâ€¦" Hiccup groaned, looking over at Toothless. Toothless grumbled a reply and rolled his eyes. Hiccup smirked and rubbed the Night Fury's head. "Nice to see you to Mr. Grumpy." And with that, Hiccup left the room followed by his ever faithful companion, Toothless.

**\*\*MEANWHILEâ€¦\*\***

A hooded figure approached a large stone fort. The fort stood just outside of Scottish territory. The walls stood twenty feet high and showed true dominance. Red flags waved atop the forts mighty walls. A sign read "L'ultimo passo", The Last Step. Two men stood on either side of a giant gate. Both held two oval shields of different colors, one blue and the other green. They both had chainmail covering there chest with a metallic helmet protecting their head and sides of their face. They both wielded long spears that stood a foot taller than them. One of the guards stepped forwards. "Alt! Chi va là ?" The guard spoke, before speaking again. " Stop! Who goes there?"

The hooded figure stopped and spoke. "Un amico dell'impero, A friend of the empire." The guards pose instantly relaxed, having recognized the voice. "Ah! We've been expecting you!" The guard stepped aside as the hooded man entered the large fort. Hundreds of soldiers walked about, all wearing similar uniforms as the two guards out front. The hooded figure walked towards a large tent that sat in the middle of the fort. Another two men stood on either side of the tent.

They wore different armor though. Both wore metal strips that covered their shoulders, chest, and a metal helmet similar to the other soldiers. Their shield was red and rectangular and had a metallic dome in the middle of the shield. Both guards grabbed onto their swords that were sheathed behind their shields. The hooded figure raised up his hands to signal he was unarmed. "I wish to speak to your commander." Recognizing the voice, the guards relaxed and motioned for him to enter the tent.

Upon entering the tent the hooded man was met with a tall, broad man who was covered in lavish armor. "Ah. It's about time you arrive. What news do you have from Scotland." The man poured himself a cup of wine and sat down on a lavish white chair.

"Of course, but it'll cost you." The general raised an eyebrow.

"And what will it be this time."

"I want your forces." The man choked on his wine and eyed the hooded figure.

"And why is that?"

"Your plan isn't working. The information I have proves your worst fears."

"Tell me and I will consider lending you my troops."

The hooded figure leaned forward. "Hiccup Horrendous Haddock is in Scotland, Dunbroc itself to be exact." The General's cup of wine fell to the ground as his fist balled up.

"He's \_what?\_" The General hissed, standing up in a fit of rage.

"I didn't stutter. Hiccups in Scotland."

"How can this be!? The bad blood between the Scottish and Vikings should have torn them apart!" The general then turned towards the hooded figure as he spoke.

"That's not the worse part. The Merida and Hiccup have become very close." This infuriated the General.

"That's not suppose to happen! \_You\_ are suppose to win her over Ailbert!" The hooded figure removed his cloak to reveal Ailber Macintosh.

"You don't think \_I\_ know that!? That little barbaric pest has ruined our plans!"

"Our plans? I'll have you know that without the \_empires\_ support none of this would have happened!"

"Aetitus!" One of the guards from outside entered the tent.

"Sir."

"Fetch me my dragon expert."

"Yes, sir." And with that, the guard left. The Generals enraged gaze focused on Ailbert as the pair waited.

A few short minutes later a tall, muscular man entered. A tattoo covering the left side of his face. He wore a brown vest and metal shoulder pads, one of them layered three high. "Ah! There you are. We have a situation."

"I know." The man spoke, unfazed.

"What do you mean you \_know\_?" The newcomer smiled.

"Hiccups an old friend of mine. Knowing his too kind heart made it easy to predict that once my dragons started attacking he'll show up."

"And you decided not to tell me?"

"All in good time. All in good time."

\*\*Ok. I bet you're sorting like "what just happened?" right about now. I know. This last part was supposed to be like that. I know you're all going to have plenty of questions and want some answers. Which will all be answered. All in good time. \*\*

## 19. Chapter 19

### Chapter 19

#### Rising Questions

"Ah. Hiccup. I'm pleased to see your up and about." Queen Elinor spoke, knitting a tapestry. Merida had dragged Hiccup all the way to the castle library. "Your Highness, its a pleasure seeing you." Hiccup said, bowing slightly in a show of respect. The Queen nodded her head in acknowledgement before putting down her tapestry. "I suspect that Merida wishes you to join us in our sessions." She cast a glance at her daughter who smiled.

"If that does not bother your highness." Hiccup spoke.

"Not at all. Only if you think you could handle it." Queen Elinor spoke, a mischievous smirk appearing on the corner of her lips. A few flags went off in Hiccups head. "Uhhh...if you put it \_that \_way-"

"Of course he can handle it!" Merida chirped in, smiling mischievously also. Hiccup looked at the two before nodding his head in agreement. "Sure. I guess I can handle it." Oh how wrong he was.

"How is this in physically possible?" Hiccup gasped, beads of sweat dripping down his face.

"Back straight, shoulders level." Elinor spoke, using a wooden stick to prod his body into his position.

"Merida, eyes forward." Merida, who had been trying to glance over at

Hiccup, quickly straightened her eyes to stare dead ahead. Taking a step back, Elinor examine the pair. Both stood as tall as the could and had a stack of books on top their heads. Meridas stack of books swayed slightly due to the years of practice she had. Hiccup on the other hand- **\*\*CRASH.\*\***

Hiccup groaned as he was forced to restack his books and place them on top his head. "Remind me to never agree to this again." Hiccup grumbled to Merida, his voice low enough so Queen Elinor couldn't hear.

"A prince does not mumble Hiccup." Elinor spoke, unwavering by his shocked expression.

"Yes your majesty." Hiccup spoke, standing tall as he rebalanced the books.

He felt like he had it down now. The beginning issues caused by his missing foot. Though he didn't dwell on the missing limb, he did miss it in times like this. "Now. I want you to join arms and walk towards me." Queen Elinor spoke, standing at the edge of the Library, at least fifteen feet away from them. Merida and Hiccup looked at each other out of the corner of their eyes, afraid to move their heads and cause the books to fall down. Hiccup held out his arm as Merida locked her elbow with his. Balancing the books was hard, walking with them and having to worry about the person next to you was a whole new level.

The pair slowly began to walk forward. Careful to set a pace as which they could maintain posture. So far so good. They were nearly half way there now. Hiccup could feel his confidence grow at this minor victory. His coordination on land hadn't always been the best. A few feet left to go now. Just before they could achieve their goal the door to the library thrust open. A royal guard rushed in. "Your Highnesses, there you are! You have to come with me right away! The castles under attack!"

"Whats Happening? Is there another dragon raid?" Elinor spoke. Merida and Hiccup quickly placed their books down, ready to jump into action to defend the castle from the dragons. The guard shook his head now, panic covering his face. "No. Much worse!"

"What is it then?" Merida spoke. The guard turned his gaze towards Hiccup.

"A Viking raid."

The temperature in the room dropped significantly. Elinor's gaze stared down at the guard. "A viking raid?" Elinor whispered. The castle and surrounding land used to be plagued by them during the early days of the kingdom, but the last ten years have been raid free. Those few years of raids were the darkest times in the kingdom. Living in constant fear that they wouldn't be able to repeal one of the raids. "Where are they now?" Elinor spoke, moving past the guard to go to the main throne room. "Their attacking the docks as we speak. They used the river to surprise us."

"How many are there?"

"We spotted a dozen ships your majesty. The town guards are holding

them off, but we can't hold them off for too long. The king has given the order to seal the castle."

"Get as many civilians as you can inside. Merida," The Queen turned towards her only daughter. "Go find the boys and keep them safe. Stay hidden until the all clear is given."

"But mum. I could help fight them off!"

"No Merida. This is beyond your level. Go find your brothers and hide."

"But mum! I've fought a dragon, I can handle myself out there!"

"Vikings kill dragons Merida." She turned around and placed her hands on her daughter's shoulders, staring deep into her eyes to get her point through. "And if they get to you, they'll do much worse than kill you."

"Your moms right Merida," Hiccup spoke, "Go find your brothers and hide." She turned to face him.

"And what about you?"

"Me? I'm going to find Astrid and the identity of these raiders." Hiccup spoke before dashing out of the main hall with Toothless right behind him.

**\*\*MEANWHILEâ€¦ \*\***

It was a clear blue morning. The air around her enticing her to simply breath in the dewy morning air. Astrid sat atop Stormfly out on patrol. The last few days had been pretty uneventful and she found it rather frustrating that such a dangerous dragon could simply disappear. Though actually being able to disappear proved that it was quite possible. She leaned back and looked over at the endless forest below her. There was no denying it, Scotland was beautiful.

She hated to admit it too, but the people were nice too. This thought was causing turmoil to Astrid. She knew it wasn't there fault for killing her father. People die in war and because of this, he was up in Valhalla now. It shouldn't be much of a deal, but the \_way\_ he died was what caused Astrid so much grief.

The war had been going on for three years now. Neither side was able to make much ground without the other side pushing back. It was uncharacteristic for Vikings to consider peace, but the dragon raids had intensified to a point where warriors couldn't afford to leave their homes undefended. An entire tribe was destroyed from a single raid that year. Having no other alternatives, Berk agreed to a peace conference. It didn't go well.

Upon arriving, the peace delegation was ambushed. Being outmatched, the Vikings put up a heroic fight. But alas, they would succumb to the tidal wave of Scottish soldiers. There were no survivors. Astrid's father participated in that delegation, believing that Scotland would want peace as much as Berk did. That was why Astrid hated the Scottish so much. Having peace talks disintegrate is understandable, but ambushing the representatives before they could even speak their

caseâ€| It was dishonorable. One that struck Astrid straight to the core.

Her father had always taught her to do the honorable thing. Never to leave an enemy mortally wounded and spare them the pain by simply ending it. To treat prisoners like the warriors they are. To treat your opponent the same way you would treat your ally. All of these values that her dad held dear came back and killed him. He trusted the Scottish, and it got him killed.

A loud blaring noise disrupted Astrid's train of thought. She sat up and looked over at the lake that acted as Dunbrochs harbor. The river that fed into the lake was filled with ships. Astrid could count at least a dozen of them. The noise sounded again, this time Astrid was quick to realize that it was a horn. Not just any horn though, a Viking war horn.

Hiccup harnessed Toothless up as fast as his hands could go. With years of practice, he managed to have him harnessed and flyable in less than a minute. Having no armor, his being ruined in an engagement with the Mjolnir, Hiccup was forced to fly with just his Harness and helmet, luckily it was more durable, protecting him. Hooking himself into the saddle, Hiccup nudged Toothless to take flight.

It took them only a few seconds to reach a comfortable flying height. Looking towards the docks he could spot the viking ships that were landing and unloading their deadly Viking cargo. "Alright bud, lets find Astrid so we could-"

"Hiccup!" Hiccup looked over to his right to see Astrid and Stormfly quickly approaching.

"Wow that was fast. Hey Astrid!" She was now flying beside him.

"What's happening?" She hollered over the wind.

"Viking raid. We have to stop it before it rekindles the second Viking-Scot war!" Hiccup hollered and Astrid nodded in pair lined up with Hiccup upfront and Astrid in back. The attacking viking were in for a big surprise.

**\*\*AT THE DOCKSâ€|\*\***

They were fighting a losing battle. That much was clear. The Viking onslaught was relentless and it seemed that no matter how many they managed to push back more came. Fergus was getting winded now. "Sir!" A towns guard ran up to him. "The lower docks are completely overran." Fergus nodded his head.

"Alright. Fall back to the castle walls. Get as many people as you can inside." Fergus redirected his attention to the docks were another two viking ships landed, a third right behind that. At this rate it wouldn't take long until the invaders were right at the castle walls. "Your majesty!" Fergus turned his head to spot Lord MacGuffin, Dingwall, and Macintosh running over to him.

"Glad to see some friendly faces in all this." Fergus spoke.

"Aye. And you'll be seeing a lot of us today. No way we're not getting a piece of this." Lord Macintosh spoke, a large smile on his face.

"Aye! Can't have you have all the fun!" Lord Dingwall said, his muscular body guard standing behind him.

"Been itching for a fight anyways." Lord Macguffin said cracking his neck.

"Like old times then?" Fergus said pulling out his two handed long sword.

"Like old times." The three lords spoke. And with that, the Scottish lords charged forward.

"We have them on the ropes men!" A brutishly muscular man spoke. He wore a hornless helmet designed more for battle then daily use. "Keep up the pressure. Nile! Bring up Yulric's ship to support the push on the town!"

"Yes sir!"

"Sir! We've spotted the King and the other Lords!" A viking reported.

"Good. Keep them occupied while we push on the castle. We have to move fast if we're to get what we came for."

"But sir. The moment they see us pushing on the castle they'll close the gates."

"Exactly. That means no more reinforcements from inside the castle."

A low whistling drew the Vikings attention. The leader looked around for the noise. It was quiet at first, but soon grew louder and louder. The leaders eyes widen in terror as he realized what was just about to happen. "NIGHT FURY!" The sudden calling of the demonic beast had all the Vikings taking cover. A blast of purple had one of the Viking ships ablaze. Fire rained down on them as Stormfly flew over, creating a fire barrier between the two factions. Looking up, the leader was met with the sight of his prized ship reduced to a burning hulk of splinters.

Hiccup landed Toothless on top of the nearest building to the fighting. The Vikings had stopped their attack and stared up at the pair in fear as Astrid circled overhead, ready for another attack if need be. The leader of the raid looked up at Hiccup, a look of sheer anger on his face. "\_You! \_Whats a Hooligan doing all the way out here?" From the color of their sails and armor, Hiccup could quickly tell which clan these Vikings belonged to, but something was off...

"I could say the same thing about you Outcast." Hiccup spoke, venom spilling out of his mouth.

"Well isn't it obvious? Doing a bit of shopping." The man spoke, sarcasm leaking out of him.



"Markets closed. Now leave." Hiccup spoke, his voice sending cold shivers down the Vikings backs.

"You know Viking law Hiccup. A Viking clan can't interrupt another clans raid."

"Clan Dunbroch is under the protection of the Dragon Academy of Berk. Leave, now." Hiccup spoke icely.

"And if I don't?" His reply was met with a plasma blast the destroyed a second Viking ship just behind him. The exploding warship sent burning fragments of wood all around him.

"Thats two of your ships. I won't hesitate to sink a third." Hiccup spoke. Toothless body tensed, ready for the third shot.

"That won't be necessary." The Outcast leader hissed. "Menâ€|.back to the ships." He motioned to leave, but stopped himself as he made eye contact with Hiccup. "Your pet won't always be there to help you." Toothless growled at the threat. Hiccup remained silent as he watched the Outcast fleet sail away, not leaving his perch until they were well into open waters.

Astrid landed beside him and watched the ships leave. "This doesn't add up. You see the markings on those ships? They weren't viking made."

"I know." Hiccup landed next to one of the destroyed ships and examined it. The hull was made from a wood not found on the Barbaric Archipelago. He could see difference in the overall design of the ship also. It was wider and longer than a traditional viking ship. The dragon carved unto the bow looked like it was carved by a one handed troll. A detail that could be overlooked. Except for the fact that sculptures were seen to bring good or bad luck to a ship. Good sculpture brought good, bad sculptures bad luck.

A Viking ship, especially a flag ship as this one, wouldn't even leave port with a sculpture looking like this. The face of the dragon was lopsided and badly deformed. "I don't think those were Outcastsâ€|" Astrid looked at him surprised.

"What do you mean? They had all the markings of Outcasts ships and even recognized us as Hooligans." She could see Hiccup wipe off some ash and reveal an engraving on the side of the hall. Upon reading it, a cold chill ran down Astrids spin. "You don't thinkâ€|?"

"I do."

"But why would they do this?"

"I don't know, but I'm planning on finding out." With that, Hiccup mounted Toothless and flew back to the Castle. The ships engraving burned into his mind.

\_\*\*S.P.Q.R\*\*\_

\*\*A/N\*\*

\*\*So how was that? Anyone know what S.P.Q.R stands for?\*\*

## 20. Chapter 20

**\*\*A/N\*\***

**\*\*Miss me? I'm truly sorry for the month + wait for this chapter. But I haven't been feeling like myself lately. I've managed to hit a surge of inspiration and managed to finish this chapter. Which has been collecting electronic dust. Anyways. Thank you all so much for your reviews. I may not single you out and reply to you, but I read every single review and they defiantly effect this story. Just like this following review that I'm going to point out.\*\***

**\*\*Just to expand on something \_Black Liger\_ said about my story being far earlier and most estimates being around the 11th and 12th century. Not to be rude or anything, but I think this story is actually pretty accurate on the dating. In \_Brave\_ the Roman Empire is mentioned by the Lords when introducing their sons. Saying how some held off a Roman fleet or was besieged by Romans. In the \_HTTYD\_ books the Roman Empire is constantly mentioned (Hiccup is even kidnapped by them in one of the books). The Western Roman Empire collapsed in 476 AD. 12th century is roughly 1100 AD, nearly 600 years later. I'm pretty sure this is why the Brave/HTTYD fan base is so large. Because it could actually happen because the time lines line up. Why did I single this out? Well unlike most fanfics on here I actually decided on a year to officially place this fanfic in.**  
**\*\***

**\*\*As of now (for now), for future plot reasons, the story is taking place in about 110 AD, give or take a few years.**  
**\*\***

**\*\*R&R!\*\***

## Chapter 20

S.P.Q.R

Toothless landed with a thump as Hiccup hopped off him as quick as he could. The castle was a buzz of activity as soldiers prepared for a second attack. "Hiccup!" Hiccup turned to see King Fergus and the other lords quickly approaching him. Save for Fergus, the others didn't look to happy to see him. "Your Majesty. I was hoping to talk to you and the Queen about this raid." The monotone tone of Hiccups voice threw the lords off as he didn't even give them a second glance as he proceeded into the throne room.

By this time Queen Elinor, Merida, and the Triplets were sitting at the thrones, having heard the all clear. Upon seeing her husband, Elinor stood up and approached them, but not before speaking to Merida. "Stay here Merida and keep an eye on the boys."

"But mum!"

"No buts Merida. Stay here." With a pout, Merida reluctantly obliged to remain seated at the throne.

"Elinor!" Fergus exclaimed, quickly hugging his beloved wife.

"Are they gone?" Elinor asked, looking at the battle torn lords and

husband.

"Aye. With a lot of help from Hiccup." Fergus said motioning for the young man to step forward. Elinor turned to face him.

"I want an explanation for this sudden and unprovoked raid." She spoke rather seriously. "We haven't faced a Viking raid in years."

"That's because it wasn't a Viking raid your majesty." Hiccup spoke.

"Preposterous! We all saw their clothes and symbols. There's no doubt they were viking!" Lord Macintosh spoke, stepping up to stand beside Hiccup.

"From the untrained eye it may appear so." Astrid spoke, walking in to stand to Hiccup's right. "Closer inspection revealed some troubling news."

"And what be that?" Elinor asked looking towards Astrid.

"Their Roman." Hiccup spoke. The word caused everyone to stiffen.

"Roman you say?" Fergus spoke, the words sounding foul in his mouth. Hiccup nodded his head yes.

"And how do you know this?" Lord MacGuffin spoke. Hiccup nodded towards Astrid and she revealed a piece of wood.

"This was taken off the hull of one of the ships. The other has an engraving just like it." Astrid spoke, handing the plank to Fergus who examined it. With a scowl, he passed it to Elinor who also examined it.

"S.P.Q.R. So it was the Roman Empire..." She spoke softly, handing over to Lord Macintosh who frowned before passing it on.

"Why would they dare attack us?" Lord Dingwall spoke, rubbing his fingers on the engraved wood.

"My suspicion is to start another Viking-Scot war." Hiccup spoke before retrieving the plank of wood.

"And their reason for this?" Elinor spoke.

"Invasion of course. They've failed at invading both the Scottish and Viking lands. Let us weaken each other before attacking themselves." Astrid spoke, folding her arms and looking around for anyone who agreed. Fergus and the other Lords nodded their heads, both seeing the logic of this plan. She looked over at Hiccup who had yet to agree or disagree.

"I don't know Astrid. Something doesn't add up. Why engrave their insignia on a viking ship to attack the Scottish so that they think we did it? Sorta defeats the purpose you know." The room grew quiet as they all tried to process this.

"What if they weren't Roman?" Lord Dingwall spoke.

"Impossible. The supplies found onboard are clearly from the Roman Empire. Plus how else could we explain the Roman insignia?" Astrid said shaking her head no.

"This isn't adding upâ€¦" Hiccup spoke softly.

"What isn't adding up?" Elinor spoke. Hiccup looked up, realizing that he had spoken out loud by mistake.

"All these events your highness. The Mjolnir's, the Romans, the Viking raid." Hiccup looked at Astrid briefly before facing the Queen, knowing that she wasn't going to like what he was just about to reveal. "And the recent assassination attempt on my life."

"Hiccup." Astrid spoke harshly. "We agreed that you weren't supposed to tell anyone."

"I know. But look at everything thats going on Astrid. These aren't just coincidences. Something big is about to happen. If it already hasn't. I don't think the Roman ships in the Archipelago are alone."

"Whats this about Roman ships?" Fergus said, interrupting Hiccup. With a sigh, Hiccup spoke. Knowing that he could be endangering Berk with revealing this information. "For the past few weeks we've been experiencing an increased number of Roman ships in our waters. Thankfully an engagement has been avoided so far. But some of our dragon riders have stopped replying to messages sent from Berk. We fear that the messages are being intercepted, but we don't know."

"Why haven't you dispatched a dragon rider to see what's going on?" Lord Dingwall spoke.

"We have. We've lost contact with them too. We can't afford to send anymore until we know what's happening."

"Why haven't they simply flown back if the messages are being intercepted?" Lord Macintosh spoke, a hint of disbelief in his voice.

"If we knew we wouldn't have a problem not knowing then would we?" Astrid spoke sarcastically. Hiccup spoke next, easing the aggistated Macintosh.

"We're sending a Viking long boat to check. When Bonnlose returns I should get an update from Berk."

A low grumble and a blue flash and most of the lords backing up as Bonnlose flew in through an open window. "Speaking of Loki. We were just talking about you." Hiccup said, scratching the Terrible Terrors head and removing the message from him. Once the message was free the Terrible Terror flew off towards Merida and coiled up on her lap. Reading the message, a small smile appeared on Hiccups face. A feature that had been missing on the viking for some time now.

Seeing the smiling Viking, Elinor spoke up. "What does it say?"

Hiccup quickly looked up, the smile still present on his face.

"We're getting some supplies."

"What do you mean by that?" Fergus spoke. Hiccup handed the message to Astrid as she quickly skimmed it. A light grin appearing on her face once she finished reading it. "By the time stamp on this message, our supplies should arrive any minute now." Astrid said, returning the message back to Hiccup.

"What supplies?" Lord MacGuffin spoke. Hiccup faced the lord and grinned happily.

"It'll be best if we simply show you." With that, Astrid and Hiccup headed out the main doors, the rest of the group quickly following.

Seeing them leave, and her curiosity getting the best of her, Merida began to follow. Her three younger brothers also began to follow. Noticing this she spun around. "Aye you wee devils. You can't come. Stay put." With a huff the triplets sighed and returned back to the throne. Merida was quite honestly surprised by this. She was expecting them to put up some type of fight. Seeing them sit down on the throne pacified any worries as she quickly ran out to catch up to Hiccup and the others.

"Think she'll get her on time?" Hiccup asked, sitting on top a barrel as he looked up towards the sky.

"Knowing her, she'll be here earlier." Astrid replied, leaning up against the castle walls beside Hiccup. Hiccup nodded his head in agreement. "She is pretty fast isn't she?"

"She gives you and Toothless a run for your money. She'll also be glad to see you. She's been running supply missions for the past month and hasn't had the time to play with you or Toothless."

"I feel bad for that too. I'm not sure she understands the responsibility she has."

"Who is she?" Merida asked, having caught up to the pair of Vikings and have even beaten her parents here. Toothless followed up behind her and nuzzled his head against Hiccup's side.

"Hey there buddy! Guess who's coming?" Toothless looked curiously up at Hiccup, his ears pointed up in attention.

Hiccup looked between Merida and Toothless and smiled. "Sterk Vilje." At the mention of this name Toothless smiled widely and began to pounce around, obviously excited. "Who's Sterk Vilje?" Merida asked curiously.

"Not who, what." Astrid said. Before Merida could amend herself, Hiccup spoke.

"She's a dragon. One of the smartest and strongest we have. But she's stubborn as could be. So stubborn in fact, that-" Hiccup was interrupted by a shriek from above. Looking up, Hiccup was met with the sight of a bright orange and red dragon landing in front of them.

The orange Nadder stood and opened up its wings as it stretched them out. Toothless, upon seeing the fiery red Nadder, quickly bounded over to her. The Deadly Nadder squeaked in glee upon seeing the Night Fury. The two dragons began circling each other and grunting playfully at each other.

"Alright you two. You can play \_after \_I remove all the supplies." Hiccup spoke, approaching the two dragons. Upon hearing Hiccup, the Deadly Nadder stopped her circling and looked over at him. The Deadly Nadder extended her wings and squeaked loudly, running full blown towards Hiccup. "Woah, woah, woah!" Hiccup held up his hands in mock surrender, but nothing seemed to slow the over eager dragon as she plowed into Hiccup.

"Ooph!" Hiccup had no where to escape as as the orange dragon nuzzled her head against him and wrapped her body and tail around him.

"Ugh. Sterk, come on girl. Air is essential to live and I definitely need some right now." With a few careful pokes and prods, the Nadder relinquished her position and retreated a few steps away. Hiccup stood up, ruffled but otherwise ok. He scratched Sterk's neck, who was pleased by the show of affection, before proceeding to unload the large saddles, at least six, that were attached to her sides. Once he was finished removing all of them, with the help of Astrid, he opened one of them and smiled. "Looks like Gobber finished it." Hiccup said pulling out a large black glove. Merida was standing beside him and was peeking a look at the contents of the saddles.

By now Elinor and Fergus had arrived along with the other three lords, who were all staring in surprise at the newest dragon. Seeing them, Hiccup stopped inspecting the supplies and thought it was best to introduce Sterk Vilje to everyone now. "Your Majesties. This is Sterk Vilje. \_Thee \_supply dragon from Berk. One of our strongest and most loyal non-rider dragon." This caused some eyebrows to rise.

"What do you mean non-rider dragon?" Elinor asked looking over at the dragon.

"Non-rider as in this here dragon doesn't have a rider." Hiccup said, scratching Sterks neck.

"Why is that?" Merida asked.

"Wellâ€¦riding a dragon takes a strong bond. A bond in which both dragon and rider have to trust each other with their lives. Sterk here hasn't formed that bond yet. So she doesn't let anyone ride her. Well, besides me that is. But since I have Toothless I can't be her rider." Meridas eyes light up at that and she quickly turned to face her mother. Expecting this, Elinor spoke before Merida could even mentally form her words. "No Merida."

"But Mum!"

"Merida. Dragon riding is extremely dangerous. Plus theres possibility that you won't bond with the dragon. You shouldn't get your hopes up to high."

"But-

"Your mom is right Merida," Hiccup interrupted, "riding dragons is very dangerous; and if you were to bond you would have to leave to train at Berk for at least a year to understand the basics of flying and how to take care of them."

"Something of which we would not allow." Fergus spoke, siding with both his wife and Hiccup.

"Plus even if you were allowed to come; these are unstable times. Berk may not be the safest place anymore. For dragon or rider." He looked over at Astrid who looked down. It was true. They both knew it. Whether or not the King, Queen and other lords knew it didn't matter. Berk and the other viking clans won't tolerate Rome raiding towns masquerading as Vikings. War was on the horizon and Berk would be leading the charge. What they didn't know, was that this soon to be war was far more complicated than what it seemed.

Several Viking long ships came ashore. Their battered and bloody crew disembarking. Their leader stepped off first and approached a tall, hooded man. "Is it done?" The man asked, looking towards the viking leader.

"Aye."

"And they possess the marked ships?"

"Aye."

"Excellent."

"Our payment?" The man tossed a pouch to the viking, who opened it and dumped the contents into his palm. Hundreds of gold aureus poured out. A face was on one side of the coin while the back had a man riding a horse with a spear. The words "Aureus de Traiani Imperatoris", which translates to "Gold of Emperor Trajan." The Vikings face lit up at the gold and he smiled brightly. With this much gold he could easily start his own clan and be off on a good start at that too. He bit into the coin, ensuring its authenticity. He smiled again once he knew they were real. "Pleasure doing business with ya."

"No. The pleasure was all mine." With no other word, the man turned and walked towards the forests edge.

"Hey wait! You never told me why you wanted me to do the raid." The Viking leader didn't get a reply as his employer entered the forest.

After a few yards the hooded man stopped and whistled lowly. Trees shook lightly and leaves fell and trickled down around him as something very large moved around. A large dragon appeared beside him, one eye blinded by three claw marks. Its black scales darkening the surrounding area. It was a Mjolnir. The man didn't even glance towards the dragon when he spoke. "Go retrieve my money." The dragon moved to comply before the man spoke once more. "Oh, and ensure that there will be no witnesses." The dragon huffed a reply as the man continued on his walk. Fire and screams soon echoing behind him.

**\*\*Just to clarify on something. Yes, this hooded man was the dragon**

expert from earlier. And yes, he is in fact controlling the Mjolnirs. Anyways, what did you think? Anyone know who Trajan is? \*\*

## 21. Chapter 21

\*\*A/N\*\*

\*\*This chapter took a \_looooong\_ time to finish. Its one of the longest chapters I've written and Its a little out of my comfort zone too. Its more of a filler chapter to set up for the next chapter. I hope you like it.  
>R&R!<strong>

### Chapter 21

The wind had picked up slightly. The once beautiful morning was quickly turning sour as the edge of a storm made landfall. "Alright lads and lass's, everyone inside before this storm hits. It's time for the traditional feast." Fergus spoke, ushering everyone back towards the castle. Hiccup ended up standing beside Merida, a bundle on his shoulder as he carried the supplies back inside. Sterk Vilje and Toothless took walked on either side of them as the small procession proceeded into the large throne room that was dual purposed as a dining hall for feasts. Currently the room was bustling with activity as people poured into the massive hall. Hiccup looked towards Merida with a raised eyebrow. "Traditional feast?" He whispered toward her, not understanding what the feast was for.

"Its tradition in Dunbroch that when we win a battle a feast is thrown in the hero of the battles name."

"Ah." Hiccup nodded his head in understanding. Berk had a similar one for the same occasion, though Hiccup couldn't imagine the two cultures being so similar.

"That hero being you." Astrid said, now standing beside them. Toothless and Sterk had wandered off towards the fireplace and taken up a cozy position in front of it. "What?" Hiccups head snapped towards Astrid. A smirk appeared on both her and Meridas face.

"She's right ya know. This is all for you. You've saved us more than once and this is the perfect occasion to pay you back." Hiccup looked towards Merida who was smiling brightly now.

"Oh. This is all too much. I do it because its the right thing to do. I don't expect nor want any form of compensation. Strengthening the relationship between Berk and Dunbroch is enough." Hiccup spoke. Merida shrugged him off.

"Blah. Your so daft Hiccup. Come on." She grabbed both Hiccup and Astrid by their wrists and dragged them to a large table. King Fergus and Queen Elinor sat at the end of the table, chatting with the other lords as food poured into the hall. Upon seeing the trio approach them, King Fergus stood; gaining an instant silence as the Scottish King spoke. "This here is a special occasion. I can say, with confidence, that if this young man wasn't here that most of us would not be alive to enjoy this celebration. That being said, let us celebrate!" Fergus raised a cup as did everyone else in the



hall.

All eyes were on Hiccup as they raised a toast to him. Hiccup rubbed the back of his neck and chuckled awkwardly, unaccustomed to the attention. "Well, uh, thanks. But this all is really unnecessary. Just doing my job, but being the Viking I am I can not refuse a feast in my name. That being said," Hiccup grabbed a nearby cup and raised it high, "let's eat!" This earned a roar of cheering as the feast began. Satisfied with the response, Hiccup took a small swig of mead. "Looks like da went all out on this one." Merida spoke, taking a large bite out of a vibrantly red apple.

"We haven't had a feast like this since the anniversary of the peace with dragons. When we retold the battle with the red death Last harvest." Astrid spoke, looking in awe at the large array of food and beverage. This had grabbed Merida's attention. "Retold?" Hiccup looked over at her and spoke.

"Ya. It's tradition that on the anniversary of the battle that it be retold. This way we never forget the struggles we endured to earn this peace."

"Or the suffering we put you through." Astrid spoke sourly. A tinge of guilt still present in her voice.

"Suffering they put you through?" Merida asked looking from Astrid to Hiccup. Hiccup's face had become a blank mask as he spoke neutrally, "it's a long story."

"A story you say? We could use a good story!" An over intoxicated Scotsman spoke loudly. This had grabbed the attention of some near by people who quickly realized who he was talking to.

"The dragon rider is going to tell us his story?" Began the whispering, which soon erupted into a frenzy of banging cups and cheers. The word reached King Fergus who stood up and raised his hands, silencing the crowd. "I here our esteemed guest is going to tell us a tale." The crowd erupted in more cheers as Hiccup was abruptly hauled to the steps of the throne by an over eager Merida.

"Wait. I never said-Merida I-" Merida quickly retreated back into the crowd leaving Hiccup standing in front of the over eager crowd. "Uhhhh..."

"Tell us the story of your victory over the red death!" A feminine voice shouted, who happened to be Merida. This snapped Hiccup out of his daze as he coughed to clear his throat.

"Well, uh, ya. You're probably dying to hear that story. But first. I believe you need to learn a little bit about my home."

Astrid gave Toothless a soft nudge, interrupting the large dragons cat nap. Stark and Stormfly were up and looking at her curiously. "Come on. Time to put on a show." With that the dragons followed Astrid to the back of the room.

"My home is Berk. It's twelve days north of Hopeless and a few degrees south of Freezing to Death. It's located solidly on the Meridian of Misery. My village. In a word, sturdy. It's been there

for seven generations, but every single building is new. We have fishing, hunting, and a charming view of the sunset. The only problems though were the pests. You see, most places have mice or mosquitoes. Not berk. We have...\_dragons.\_" At this, the door to the hall slammed shut and some of the torches inside the hall were extinguished.

"The only way to gain any status among them was to slay a dragon. Because of this, I was at the bottom of the social list. Too small, too weak, too scrawny, too creative, too...Hiccup. But that was all to change. On that fateful day five years ago I not only set out to find myself the most deadly dragon known to Viking kind; I planned to kill it. I was going to kill a Night Fury." Even more torches were extinguished, cascading the hall into darkness.

"You see. Every dragon we've faced has been categorized and their threat value assessed. Each one was labeled to be killed on sight. Not the Night Fury though. Never seen by Viking kind, it lurks in the shadows waiting for the opportune moment to strike. And when it does, it \_never\_ \_misses. Your only hope is to hide and hope it doesn't find you." The light behind Hiccup suddenly ignited. Revealing Toothless as he stood menacingly behind Hiccup.

This caused some of the closer people to back up in surprise and fear.

"I shot him down. The village didn't believe me though. So, hoping to salvage what little respect I had, I set off into the woods to find it. When I did find him I realized something. I couldn't kill a dragon. I \_wouldn't\_ kill a dragon. So I did something that no other Viking had ever thought to do, I let him go. Honestly, I was expecting him to turn around and kill me right there and then. And when he pounced on me, his head recoiling as if he was about to strike, I believed with all my heart he was going to kill me. He didn't though. Instead of killing me he roared and took off. From that moment on, I made it my mission to learn everything I could about dragons." At this, Hiccup scratched Toothless head. Making the large Night Fury look much more passive.

"It took nearly a month to gain his trust, and another month to learn how to fly. That first flight was nearly my last, but that tale is for another story. While I was learning some secrets about dragons, I was enrolled in dragon training. Using the tricks I learned with Toothless and some other dragons, I quickly became a favorite within the class. Even surpassing the dragon fighting prodigy, Astrid." Hiccup smirked slightly towards Astrid, who rolled her eyes at him. A slight grin on her face.

"In a series of unfortunate events that involved me winning dragon training and gaining the 'Honor' of killing a Monstrous Nightmare, Astrid found Toothless and myself in our cove attempting to leave Berk. If it wasn't for her intervening, I probably would have left Berk to never come back. Being the loyal Viking she is, Astrid fled to go tell Chief Stoick, my father, about Toothless and I. We intercepted her though. Hoping that if we changed the mind of the most devoted Viking of our generation that there could be hope to change the minds of the other teens. In the following flight, we discovered something terrifying. We found the dragons home and on that Island was a monster. A dragon so large it could swallow the entire island of Berk in a single bite. Its giant tail could level

this very castle in one sweep." Hiccup swept his arms around the throne room, the candle light flickering off the walls.

"We fled. Barely escaping as the massive jaws of the Red Death snapped behind us. We got back to Berk unscaved. It was then that I realized the dragons weren't attacking us just to eat. They were attacking us to feed the Red Death, it was acting as some sort of 'Queen Bee'. I had to tell the village. So I went to the dragon arena, believing that if I showed the entire village that Dragons weren't killers that I could finally get through to the village. I wish I could say that the plan went perfectly, but it didn't. My father enraged the Monstrous Nightmare before I could befriend it. Running for my life, I had no where to go as the Monstrous Nightmare pinned me to the ground. In a show of extreme speed and agility, Toothless burst into the kill a matter of seconds, he defeated the Monstrous Nightmare. He was captured though, the horde of Vikings quickly overwhelming him. I pleaded with my father not to harm him. I even explained to him what was lurking on their grabbed his attention, but not for the reason I had hoped. He quickly learned how to find their island and left to ready the Berkian fleet. I pleaded again for him to stop, he didn't listen. Instead he disowned me. Stating that he had no son." Hiccup spoke softly towards the end. It still stung, though he had long forgiven him.

"So they loaded my best friend onto the lead ship, the rest of the Hooligans loading up into various other ships. I watched them disappear into the horizon, knowing that none of them would return with what lurked beneath Dragon Island. I had given up and would have remained moping if it wasn't for a certain viking prodigy that gave me a push in the right direction." Hiccup looked over towards Astrid, who was standing beside Merida now.

"With the help of the other teenagers of Berk we freed the dragons inside the kill ring and with their help we flew to Dragon Island. The sight that greeted us was terrifying. The Red Death had broken out of its ancient lair and was standing on the beach, towering hundreds of feet above the Vikings of Berk, who were fleeing towards the opposite side of the island to escape the impending massacre. The entire Berkian fleet was aflame leaving the only hope for survival gone. Without hesitation, we engaged the Red Death. While the other dragon riders distracted the death, me and Astrid flew over the remainders of the Berkian fleet, hoping to see any sign of Toothless. We spotted him struggling to get free, the flames surrounding him and blocking out the outside world. I jumped down and told Astrid to help the others while I freed locks were too strong though and before I could get any sort of leverage the massive tail of the Red Death swung at the ship, cracking it in half and sending us to the bottom."

"I wasn't about to let my friend die. I followed him to the bottom and continued to struggle with the locks. Even when my body begged for air I continued to tug at the ropes. Right before I lost consciousness a massive arm wrapped around my body dragging me back to the surface. It was my father who had saved me. He didn't even say a word as he dived back into the water. A few seconds later he emerged, Toothless above him as he landed beside me. With a nod of his head, I understood what we needed to do. In a matter of seconds I was strapping into the stirrup and preparing for battle. Just before lift off my father grabbed my arm. He told me he was sorry and that I didn't have to go out thereâ€¦." Hiccup paused at this, memories of

the battle flooding into his head.

"What did you say?" Asked a guard after a too long of a pause. This snapped Hiccup out of his remission. Quickly remembering where he was at, he spoke. "I told him we were Vikings, it was an occupational hazard."

This earned some chuckles from the crowd.

"And with that final word, we took off, soaring high above to gain the aerial advantage. Astrid, Tuffnut and Ruffnut had just rescued Snotloot from the clutches of the Red Death." The names earned a few snickers. "Ya, ya, ya. Vikings and terrible names. We get it. Anyways. The Red Death opened is giant mouth and began sucking in air, unfortunately Astrid was got in the vortex it created. Unable to escape, her and her dragon were slowly dragged toward the razor sharp death of the Death. Seeing this, we dived down upon the Red Death, at the last second we released a firebolt into the dragons mouth blasting the pair free, unfortunately the blast knocked Astrid off her dragon. Spinning, we flew over her and caught her mid air. We set her down and gained altitude, knowing this would be the most important fight of our lives."

"A few shots at the Red Death revealed a giant set of wings. As it opened its wings a giant shadow was cast on the island, blocking out the sun and turning day to night. We flew off as fast as we could away from the dragon, it followed. We weaved in and out of huge sea stakes, praying to Thor that we wouldn't collide with one. We dared to glance back as we passed the beach, the Vikings of Berk cheering us on as we zoomed by. The Red Death never slowed, never hesitated as it pursued us. It smashed anything in its path, crashing through the sea pillars as if they were made of twigs. We couldn't last much longer on the ground. That much was clear. So we began to climb. Entering the dark clouds that surrounded the island we knew that we had the advantage. Afterall, the dark is a Night Furies element."

"We disappeared into the clouds and out of sight." At this all the lights in the hall were extinguished. No one could see a few inches in front of them as everyone held their breath. "The night is our this we surrounded him." Hiccups voice was just a whisper as it floated around the room. Coming from everywhere and nowhere at once. Thats when we attacked." A shot of purple lit up the hall, illuminating a shadow of the Red Death.

"We didn't let up as we hammered away at him. Each blast infuriating the death." The crowd was enthralled in the story. If they didn't know any better they could believe that this was actually taking place.

"Enraged, the Red Death opened its giant maw and sprayed fire in every direction. Hoping for the slightest chance of hitting us." At this fire erupted around the hall, reigniting all the torches. "He got lucky and the fire got the edge of Toothless prosthetic fin. It ignited and quickly began to burn. We were out of time. We dove down on the Red Death; with our tail on fire we were easily spotted. The Red Death snapped at us as we dove down, going fast as we could. The Red Death followed, his eyes filled with bloodlust. Our fin burned and burn, the smoke fueling the Deaths hunger as it opened it mouth; filling it with flammable gas, it prepared to finish us off. At the

last second we spun around and fired a single shot into its mouth. It ignited, covering the entire mouth of the dragon in flames. The ground was quickly approaching it, and seeing it so close the death opened its wings to stop its descent. What it didn't realize was that the blasts we had shot at it had tore holes in its wings. Its wings ripped open and it crashed head first into the ground, exploding in a giant fire ball of flames."

"We flew up its back, trying our best to get out of the explosion. The prosthetic fin broke off, burnt to a crisp. Having no control we looked on in horror as the massive tail of the death came towards us. A final blow against us as it died. There was no hope in dodging it. We crashed into it full force. I don't remember what happened after this, having been unconscious. What I do know though is that as I fell Toothless did his best to save me. The fire consumed me as he dived down to reach me. We survived and had managed to bring a well earned peace between dragons and vikings. Though a price was paid for it." Hiccup looked down at his missing leg, a light smile playing his lips. "But we're a matching pair now and I wouldn't want it any other way." The crowd of Scotsmen quickly swarmed Hiccup. Everyone cheering and praising him for his accomplishment, even though it was all those years ago.

Hiccup took it like he did all those years ago. He smiled, nodded his head and said it was nothing. This earned him another roar of cheering. "These vikings! Taking down a monster the size of their island and losing a leg! And it was nothing! HA!" A Scotsmen spoke, earning more cheers. The crowd slowly dispersed. The feast continuing and more stories were to be told. Hiccup weaved his way through the crowd and sat down at a relatively empty table. He sighed in relief. It had been awhile since he's told it. He had no doubt that he remembered it. An event like that would be hard not to remember. He just never really liked to tell it. He scratched his prosthetic absent mindedly, the phantom foot tingling. A flood of red curls overflowed him as Merida sat down beside him. Two plates full of food in her hands as she set it down in front of them. Astrid was quick to follow her, carrying her plate and a few cups of mead for the three of them.

"Thanks." He spoke before eating, the days events leaving him gave him a soft nudge as he sat talking to both Merida and Astrid. He looked back and saw Toothless nod his head towards the door. The storm outside had quieted and cleared as the feast progressed. Seeing the look on Toothless face made it abundantly clear what he wanted to do. A flight at night after a storm was absolutely amazing. A large smile spread across Hiccups face. "Alright bud. Let me get ready and we'll go." Stormfly nudged Astrids back to as Hiccup stood. Apparently flying after a storm was a dragon tradition. Merida quickly stood up as well. "Could I come with?" She quickly spoke. She had only flown a handful of times, but never at night.

Hiccup looked over at Astrid who he could tell was frowning. A night flight was something special. Something couples on Berk did together. It was an experience like no other. Hiccup and Astrid had shared multiple experiences like this. She had changed her mind on dragons on one such ride. Hiccup couldn't say yes. It would strain his and Astrids already strained relationship. He opened his mouth to speak, but was interrupted. "Sure." Hiccup looked wide eyed towards Astrid, who had spoken. Merida smiled brightly and hugged her.

"Thank you, thank you, thank you. This is going to be so much fun!"

At this she took off towards the castle doors, tugging Astrid along.

"Oh this is going to be something alright." Hiccup mumbled helplessly. Toothless grumbled a chirpy reply as he nudged his rider forward.

"Alright, alright. Lets go bud."

**\*\*Well? Any thoughts/suggestions?\*\***

## 22. Chapter 22

**\*\*A/N\*\***

**\*\*Phew. Finally done. Hope it was well worth the wait!\*\***

**\*\*R&R!\*\***

## Chapter 22

Hiccup fastened the last strap across his arm. It had taken him a few minutes to strap on his newest armor. Unlike his previous flight suit, which was built more for exploration and relaxing flights, this one was built specifically for rigorous combat. The overall design was similar, though the armor was much thicker around his torso. Instead of one layer of leather armor, it was composed of several layers that overlapped each other to form a scale like effect. It was discovered that this improved mobility, made it lighter, and provided more protection. His legs were protected by thick loose leather pants that were just as maneuverable as regular pants. His shins and knees were protected by metal shin guards that were a brownish color. All the leather was made from a new armor technique that involved the blending of cowhide and dragon scales, which were common with the numerous dragons on berk. The armor was lighter and tougher than any other leather armor, not to mention fireproof.

Though this armor was state of the art, the most impressive piece of equipment was hiccups arm guards. Each arm was protected by two arm braces that we're made from dragon skin armor. Each one held a unique weapon designed by Hiccup. His left arm held a small crossbow that could shoot anything he needed, whether it be an arrow or grappling hook. With a touch of a button the crossbow would fire and reload itself from a secret compartment inside the arm brace, it was ingenious to say the least. On his right held the most advanced weapon of them all. Using Zippleback gas, Hiccup created the first ever handheld flamethrower. One "clip", as Gobber deemed the capsules used to refill the flamethrower, was capable of producing a stream of flame.

Even though this armor surpassed any other of the time, it had its flaws. Being made from anything besides metal allowed swords and other large weapons to puncture the armor. The dragon scales improved the leathers strength but it had its limits. A second flaw is the time it takes to make. It took Gobber and Hiccup nearly a month to

get the torso right. Add in an extra month for pants and over a year for Hiccup to design the crossbow and flamethrower, it proved to be quite the costly investment. Hopefully it would pay off though. It would be a shame to ruin it on its first trial.

Hiccup walked out side the main gates and was greeted by Toothless who nudged Hiccup. He looked over at Stormfly to his right and spotted Astrid on top with Merida right behind her. Hiccup suspected this would be the case, knowing Astrid. The only reason why Astrid is letting Merida go is due to the fact that she'll be riding with her, which was fine with Hiccup. He was simply surprised. Astrid was adamant about hating Scots, now here she was giving a ride to the Scottish princess. \_"Maybe she's changed her mind, or lost it." \_Hiccup chuckled to himself, he wouldn't question it though. But he would keep a close eye on them.

Merida spotted Hiccup as he mounted Toothless. Even in the glow of the moonlight Merida could see the changes in his armor. His helmet was tucked in front of him as he strapped himself in. The outfit brought out the lean build of his developing muscles and emphasized the power he was capable of without over doing it, as did some of the large chain mail armours. Merida could feel her face heat up the longer she stared. How could a simple outfit change him so much? "You ready?" Astrid spoke, looking back at her. Merida quickly nodded her head and wrapped her arms around Astrid. She was accustomed to riding with Hiccup so the next words came out before her brain even registered them.

"You won't drop me right?"

"Of course not. Hiccup would have my head."

Merida exhaled in relief.

"But I did think about it."

"Wait, what?!" With no response, Stormfly bolted into the air; followed closely by Hiccup and Toothless.

After a few hundred feet she leveled off, Hiccup right beside them. "Where we heading?" Merida spoke once the trio were leveled and flying side by side. Both Astrid and Hiccup shrugged their shoulders simultaneously. "That's the beauty of a night flight. You go where ever the wind takes you. The only thing up here is us and the stars." Hiccup spoke, leaning back to gaze up at the clear sky. Stars encompassing every inch of the dark sky. A misty rift appeared in the night sky that split the sky in half. Illuminating the sky in light pinks and purples. "Asgard." Astrid whispered softly as she stared up at the sight. Hiccup nodded his head and leaned down to lay on Toothless neck, scratching the top of his head fondly. This was a perfect night for relaxation.

"Asgard?" Merida questioned.

"The realm of the gods. It's where Valhalla is. The place where all brave warriors go who die in battle." Astrid spoke. Merida nodded her head. If Asgard did infact look anything like this, it sure was pretty.

Merida stared up at the stars. A sight like this wouldn't be possible

on the ground, no matter how clear or dark the sky was. It felt as if she could reach out and grab her very own star. She giggled in absolute bliss, her arms letting go of Astrid as she stretched her arms upwards towards the heavens. Astrid smirked back at Merida before looking over at Hiccup. Hiccup was smiling over at the pair and laughed when Astrid rolled her eyes at him. The fresh air clung to their clothes as they flew lazily through the sky, enjoying the flight in silence.

"Is what he said really true?" Astrid nearly missed the question when Merida spoke softly. Astrid looked back towards her and replied, keeping the low tone that was meant to prevent Hiccup from hearing. "Is what true?"

"Everything Hiccup said, about being disowned and being so graceful with losing his leg." Astrid nodded her head. "He doesn't take enough credit though. He saved his entire village, even though he was banished. Any other viking would have left the tribe to die. Not Hiccup though. He got his friend out, and the pair began fighting the death. They could have easily left, flown away and left us to die." Merida looked over at Hiccup, a smile playing on her lips. Her eyes returned to the stars, having nothing else to say and simply wanting to enjoy the stars.

Toothless ears perked up abruptly, his head swung side to side and his nostrils flared. What ever it was, Stormfly picked up on it too as her head swung back and forth also. Both Hiccup and Astrid changed stances from relaxation to alertness. Feeling both Astrid and Stormfly stiffen, Merida removed her gaze from stars. "What is it?"

"I don't know, but it's got the dragons spooked." Astrid replied, looking around at the treetops below. The moon provided some light, but not nearly enough to illuminate the forest floor.

Toothless head swung down and to the right, towards the beach. "Toothless has something. Astrid, stay right behind me. At the first sign of trouble get the princess out of her."

"Oi! I can take care of myself!" Merida protested. Hiccup ignored her and focused on Astrid. She nodded her head in agreement. It didn't take long for them to land on the sandy shores. The moment they did though, they regretted it. A foul smell enveloped them and burned their nostrils. Merida gagged and covered her nose in a futile attempt to block out the smell. "What is that awful smell?" Merida spoke, her voices muffled as she hopped off of Stormfly. Astrid was right behind her, a large frown on her face. She knew exactly what it was and only one word could describe it. "Death."

Hiccup looked back at Astrid and gave a slight nod of his head. "Toothless, light." Understanding the command Toothless shot a bolt of purple fire up into the sky, illuminating the beach. The sight made the Vikings cringe and the young princess to vomit. "By Thor...what could of done this...?" Astrid spoke looking at the scene front of them. Burnt bodies littered the beach and the burnt hulls of a few ships littered the beach. "Dragons." Hiccup spoke, standing next to the scorched hull of a ship. Large claw marks covered the ship, signaling the presence of a dragon, a large one at that.

"You don't think...?"



"I do. It was a Mjolnir alright. By the number of dead it was at least three or four."

"They were Vikings. Aren't they supposed to be able to fight dragons?" Merida spoke, having composed herself. Though the grisly sight still deeply nauseated her.

"By the looks of it this was just after the raid at DunBroch." Astrid spoke, examining one of the crisp remains.

"How can you tell they're the same Vikings?" Merida questioned.

"Easy. Their clothes, what's left of it anyways, are similar. They have the same number of ships that participated in the attack. And the side of the ships have the same insignia." Astrid spoke returning to Stormfly.

"We better get back to the castle incase the Mjolnir's show up again." Merida nodded in agreement and hopped on behind Astrid. Merida looked over at Hiccup, who was still examine the bloody beach. "Hiccup. Let's go."

"Just wait." He knelt down beside a familiar chard remain. Hiccup recognized it as the leader of the group. "Guess even you weren't spared...I hope Odin forgives your treachery towards your brethren." A glimmer of gold caught Hiccups attention. "What's this?" Grabbing it, Hiccup twirled the gold coin in his fingers. The face of Emperor Trajan greeted him. "Interesting...now where did you get this from?"

"Hiccup let's go!" Astrid called. Both her and Stormfly looking towards him in urgency. The scene had a negative effect on both dragons. Unnerving the legendary beasts in ways that were previously thought impossible. "Alright. Let's go." Hiccup mounted Toothless and the group took flight.

When they landed at the castle they were greeted with a mass of sleeping Scotsmen. Merida groaned in annoyance. "Seems like their all passed out. Reminds me of home." Astrid spoke. Hiccup rolled her eyes and looked towards Astrid and Merida. "Alright. There's no way we could tell King Fergus tonight. And the Queen is most likely asleep as well. We'll all sleep as well and tell them first thing in the morning. Agreed?" Both Astrid and Merida nodded their head in agreement. With that, they all retreated towards their independent rooms.

Hiccup promptly collapsed when he entered his room. The days events catching up to him. He removed his armor and metal guards before climbing into bed. He was asleep before his head touched the pillow. Toothless quickly followed suit.

Even though most of the castle was sound asleep, a four men were wide awake and searching the halls. "You sure this is a wise idea? I mean what if-"

"Shut it you ninny. If we do this quick and quiet we'll get paid enough to never work for these spoiled royals ever again!"

"But what about the drag-"

"Here! I told you our boss would give us some equipment to handle those pesky Vikings!" One of the men tugged on a burlap bag and spilled the contents of the bag on the floor as quietly as possible. "Swords, crossbows? We could have gotten these from the forge for crying out loud!"

"Shush! These aren't ordinary swords. They're made from a very special metal that could easily pierce dragonhide.."

"Oooh. Did the boss say what kind?"

"Ya. Something very rare." The man paused in thought. "Bronkle metal or something."

"Probably something"

"Shut it. The point is, we do the job and we get paid." The four men paused outside of a door to one of the castle's many rooms. "Alright. We sneak in and kill them both before they even know what hit 'em."

"Agreed." One of the men opened the door and took a cautious step in. His comrades following close behind him. "Take the dragon. I'll take the boy."

"No way! You take the dragon."

"Shut up!" The man in the back hissed. "Do you want us to get caught!"

"Caught doing what?" A voice spoke from the bed.

"You know bloody hell what!" The man in front spoke, his head turning to look at his comrade behind him.

"Uh. I didn't see that." The man behind him spoke. With a look of surprise, they both looked towards the bed, where Hiccup sat arms folded. "Well?" Hiccup spoke, pulling out his sword and standing up. By now Toothless was growling in warning. The four men shared a glance before charging towards Hiccup.

Hiccup blocked the first few strikes as Toothless swept his tail at one of the men, knocking him back into the wall. Hiccup slashed the one on the assailant's arm, earning a sharp yelp of pain. He looked towards Hiccup and charged forward. The small room proved unfavorable as the combat ensued. The close combat forced Hiccup and Toothless into the back of the room. An arrow from a crossbow flew towards the pair, Hiccup grabbed his shield and held it up, the arrow bouncing off the tough shield. Hiccup lowered the shield only to be greeted with a punch to the face. The force of the blow sent him falling down onto the floor. Toothless roared and shot a bolt of fire out, missing the men but scorching the wood behind them. Three of the four men quickly piled on top of Toothless, forcing his mouth shut and restraining him. The fourth man walked over to the trapped dragon, a long sword held in one hand. "With you dead. We'll be fetching a nice pay check."

Dazed, Hiccup looked over to the side of the bed, his armored arm

guards lying on the ground. Scrambling over, he quickly strapped them on and looked over at the Toothless. The man raised his sword up, ready to strike and kill the infamous Night Fury. Hiccup aimed his left arm and clicked a button. Two arrows flew out and stuck the man in the back. Howling in pain, he whirled around and narrowed his eyes at Hiccup as he charged towards him. Hiccup instinctively raised his right arm, a stream of fire quickly following. He let out a blood curdling cry as the fire engulfed him. His comrades looked on in horror as their supposed leader ran out the door on fire. This distraction allowed Toothless to break free from his bonds. The man closest to his mouth was rewarded with a bolt of fire that sent him crashing into the door. Toothless tail swept at the man behind him, sending him flying and crashing into the bed, turning it into splinters. The fourth and final man looked on in horror as Hiccup delivered a haymaker punch, knocking the man unconscious.

By now the commotion had awakened nearly everyone in the castle. Astrid, being the closest to the scene, was first to arrive at the scene. She looked at the four unconscious men laying in a tangled, smoldering mess before peering into the room. Fire outlined and charred the door frame as Toothless laid on the other side, a satisfied look on his face. She spotted Hiccup standing beside him, staring angrily at the four men. A dark bruise was beginning to form on Hiccup's cheek. "Hiccup!" Astrid was immediately beside him as she eased him over to the bed. "I'm fine Astrid." Hiccup spoke, his eyes never leaving the men. He was forced to tear his gaze away as Astrid examined his wounds. A few cuts and bruises, the worse being a sword cut along his arm which luckily wouldn't need stitches.

Two guards were the next people on the scene followed by King Fergus, who stumbled every few feet due to his recent awakening. He examined the men before turning towards Hiccup and Astrid. "What happened here?"

"Assassination attempt." Astrid spoke, the words burning the air in the hall. Fergus turned beet red and glared at the men. "Take them to the dungeon. I want to figure out how these men gained access to my hall!" He turned his gaze back towards Hiccup and noticed his bruised face. "And retrieve the royal healer while you're at it!"

Queen Elinor and Merida were the next on the scene and were briefed on what happened by Fergus. Merida felt her stomach lurch into her throat as she quickly entered Hiccup's room. "Are you ok?" She spoke as Astrid stood to examine Toothless. "I'm fine. Really." Merida sighed in relief when she saw the superficial wounds.

"That's for me to decide." The royal healer spoke. He knelt beside Hiccup and began to examine the wounds.

"How's Toothless?" Hiccup asked looking over at Astrid. She nodded her head. "He'll be fine. Just a few scratches. Didn't even draw blood." She stood and walked over to the healer.

He grabbed hold of his cut arm and sighed. "Boy, you really don't know how to stay out of trouble do you?" Hiccup shrugged his shoulders and shrugged.

"I'm a viking. We have stubbornness issues. What do you expect?"

**\*\*Any comments/suggestions? Thanks for reading!\*\***

## 23. Chapter 23

**\*\*A/N\*\*\***

**\*\*I'm on a role. Honestly. This chapter is more of a set up for chapter 24. Which is a major plot chapter. Enjoy!\*\***

**\*\*R&R!\*\***

### Chapter 23

#### New Friend

The room was fairly quiet while the royal healer worked. "It seems like you ignored my advice with your leg. You have some swelling that you could easily prevent." The healer examined Hiccups stump that was his left leg. "I told you to take it easy." Hiccup grinned and shrugged sheepishly. "I swear. It's a wonder how you Vikings heal at all. With all the injuries you get." Both Astrid and Hiccup merely rolled their eyes at this.

"Here, drink this. It will help with the healing." Hiccup took the wooden mug from the Healer and smelled it. "Oh dear Thor does that smell!" Hiccup wince, covering his nose with his free hand and holding the cup away. Toothless gave it a slight sniff before recoiling and baring his teeth at the foul smelling liquid. Well, liquid might be pushing it. More like a slime. Dragon slime. Hiccup gagged reflexively at the thought. "Ah don't be such a wimp. Drink." The healer spoke nonchalant, clearly unfazed by the horrendous odor. Hiccup steeled his nerves before quickly chugging the drink. His eyes watered as his throat attempted to force the medicine down. "By Loki. That was simply awful." Hiccup gagged again and suppressed the urge to vomit.

"You throw that up laddie and you'll keep drinking it till it stays down."

"You take sick enjoyment in this." Hiccup scolded. The healer smirked and shrugged.

"Wheres the fun in my job if I don't have a little fun? Now. Get some rest." What ever he had given him was agreeing with that statement as Hiccup let out a hearty yawn. The medicine amplifying his already drowsy state.

Hiccup laid down on his bed, or rather what remained of it after the brief fight, and was soon fast asleep. The room quickly emptied as Toothless laid down next to the door, ensuring no one would enter.

Astrid turned to look at the Royal family, a deep frown on her face. "I have to inform Berk of this. They won't be happy." Fergus nodded his head. Astrid turned to walk away before she turned and spoke. "We were planning on telling you this in the morning. But seeing as you're awake might as well tell you now. We found the Viking camp that raided you." Fergus hand touched his sword, eager to know where

they were. "Or rather, what's left of it. They had a nasty run in with the Mjolnir. There were no survivors." Astrid said somberly. Fergus nodded his head and sighed. "Things just can't be simple can they. Thank you lass. Get some sleep." Astrid nodded her head before returning to her room.

Fergus looked over as his daughter and patted her shoulder. "You two. A guard will be outside your door if you need anything." Merida softly nodded her head and returned to her room.

Morning light poured through the curtains as Astrid sat up and stretched. She was always a morning person and preferred to get most of her chores done during the first hours of the day. Stretching, she quickly dressed and walked down the hall and knocked on Hiccup's door. Receiving no answer, she peeked in and saw his sleeping form. Toothless' head perked up at her entry, but seeing who it was returned to his sleep. Smiling, she walked over and brushed the hair from his face. "How is he?" Astrid whirled around to see Merida standing in the doorway. A soft sigh escaped Astrid's lips as she returned her gaze back to Hiccup. "So far so good."

Merida walked up beside her and peered down at him, seeing Astrid twist a couple pieces of his hair into a braid. "I'm sorry for all the trouble I've caused you." Merida's head snapped towards Astrid.

"What?"

Astrid sighed. "I'm not a real big fan of Scots. For good reason. You see, when I was a little girl I looked up to my dad. He was the bravest, smartest, and funniest man I have ever known." Merida listened intently, feeling her own love for her dad come out. "I admired the man. I only had a brief time with him. He wasn't like most Vikings who loved a good fight. He was a smart man. A rare occurrence in Viking society. He saw the need for peace between Vikings and Scots. How neither one of our civilizations were winning and the war was draining our resources more and more with each passing day. So with Stoicks' authorization, he and a small war band left to Scotland to draft a peace treaty or at least a cease fire." Astrid looked from Hiccup to Merida. "He was ambushed and killed, all the while trying to make a better future for his people. I will never forget what your people did to me and my family." Astrid looked over at Hiccup. "But for Hiccup. I'm willing to forgive." Astrid extended her hand towards Merida. Merida looked at it and grasped it firmly, giving it one good shake.

A low gurgle from the door grabbed both girls' attention. Bonnlöse swept in and landed on Astrid's shoulder. "Hey there Bonnlöse. News from Berk?" The Terrible Terror motioned its small head towards the capsule tied to him. Astrid retrieved the message and scratched the Terrible Terror's head, earning a soft purr. "Good boy." Astrid opened the message and began to read. Her face scrunching up as she finished, only for her to quickly reread the message. She finished and looked towards Hiccup. "Hiccup," She shook his shoulder lightly. "Wake up. You have to read this. Now."

"Ewan told us to let him rest." Merida objected in a whisper. Astrid shook Hiccup harder, earning a soft groan and his eyes opened.

"Wha-what's wrong?" Hiccup yawned as he slowly sat up, rubbing the sleep from his eyes.

"Read this. Now." Astrid handed Hiccup the message and he slowly began to read it. The sleep quickly leaving his eyes as he began to further read it.

"Astrid...I'm not sure I'm reading this right."

"Oh yes you are."

"But...but-how canâ€|.an entire tribe?" Astrid nodded her head.

"It won't be long until the elders call all the chiefs."

"Can someone tell me what is going on?" Merida asked. Both Hiccup and Astrid jumped at the sound of her voice, momentarily forgetting she was even in the room.

Merida narrowed her eyes at them. "Glad that I can be easily forgotten." Hiccup rubbed the back of his neck. "Sorry bout that. You remember when I told you about us losing contact with a few of our dragonriders?" Merida nodded her head yes. "Well we found them."

"Isn't that a good thing?" Merida asked looking at the gloomy faces.

"It is. If they weren't Roman prisoners." Astrid spoke standing. Merida looked up at her stunned.

"I'll send the reply Hiccup and I'm including last nights attack."

"Great. As if dad doesn't have enough to deal with." Hiccup sighed, rubbing his temples as Toothless walked over and placed his head in Hiccups lap. Hiccup scratched Toothless head and smiled as his friend grumbled and purred. His best friend always knew how to cheer him up. "Ya I guess you're right bud. We'll get them back. And make sure the Romans think twice about messing with us." Toothless wiggled his tail and got up. "You ready for a flight then bud?" A rumble of approvement was all Hiccup needed as he stood up and looked over at Merida. "We'll see you later tonight then. At dinner. I think a long relaxing flight is way overdue." Toothless barked an agreement and quickly took off at the door, knocking both Hiccup and Merida to the floor.

"Ugh. Stupid useless reptile." Hiccup groaned as he stood up. He reached down and hauled Merida to her feet, her hair completely covering her face. Hiccup chuckled as she unburied her face from her hair, a dark tinge of red on her cheeks. "Sorry about that Mer." Hiccup smiled as he grabbed his her. "I'll see you later. Oh! Could you tell Astrid I'm going out for a flight?" Hiccup said pausing at the door and looking back at her. She nodded her head and he grinned crookedly. "Thanks!"

Snapping out of her momentary gaze, Merida hollered after him. "Make sure to take it easy! Ewan is getting tired of taking care of you!" Hiccup laughed at this.

"Its just a flight around DunBroch, what could possible happen?"

"Forget about the dangerous dragons out there?"

"Point taken. I'll make sure to stay out of trouble." Toothless barked. "Ya, ya, ya. I'm coming, I'm coming."

"Ugh. That Viking is his own worse enemy." With that, she went off to find Astrid and inform her of Hiccups impromptu flight.

The early daylight was just passing the horizon as it rose into the sky. A waterfall shot water over a large spun as they flew through it, drenching both dragon and rider in the red water. "Toothlessâ€|" Hiccup scowled softly, shaking the water off his body. Toothless laughed and began to climb.

"Hiccup changed positions and hunkered down as Toothless hit the peak of his climb. Hiccup lowered himself further as Toothless tucked his wings in. Hiccup let out a hearty cheer as they zoomed through the sky towards the ocean below. With a fraction of a second to react, Hiccup changed positions and Toothless unfurled his wings. A massive shock wave collected behind them as the pair rocketed across the water.

Toothless angled up as the two gained altitude. Hiccup sat up and laughed. Nothing like a near death experience to get the heart going. Hiccup looked over towards the land and smiled. The sun was basking the trees in orange light that only happened in the early hours of the day. Hiccup smiled and stretched his hands upwards. He missed these relaxing flights. This was definitely overdue. A loud crash to inland drew both their attentions. "What in midgard was that." Hiccup whispered as he looked inland. A few trees shook to have one or two fall over. "Ok bud, we promised to stay out of trouble. So we're going to investigate. Got it?" Toothless rolled his eyes and nodded his head, mimicking the speech by opening and closing his mouth.

"Hey! Bad dragon!" Toothless quickly zoomed towards the disturbance.

"Easy bud." Hiccup murmured as they flew above a large clearing. Trees uprooted and strone about. Toothless swiftly landed and Hiccup dismounted. Hiccup looked around and noticed large scorch marks throughout the clearing, mainly on the ground. Hiccup looked around, noticing a familiar pattern. "I've seen these marks before. They belong to a-" A large crash from behind froze Hiccup mid sentence. Hiccup turned around and shuddered. "Typhoomerang."

Toothless let out a low growl as the Typhoomerang approached. The dragon began to circle the pair as Hiccup stood as close to Toothless as he could. "What in Thors name are you doing way out hereâ€|" Hiccup whispered. The clanging of metal drew his attention to the dragons legs. Large spiked shackles enclosed the dragons legs and large chains trailed behind them. Hiccups eyes widened as he noticed the cuts and scars covering its body along with the weapons still impaled in its hide. "Who could have done such a thingâ€|" Now leaving the safety of Toothless, Hiccup cautiously approached the Typhoomerang. It lowered its massive frame down and growled low at Hiccup. "Its ok. Everythings ok. I just want to help." Hiccup reached

out his hand and averted his gaze, a show of submission and trust. The Typhoomerang whimpered softly as it nuzzled Hiccups hand, a sense of safety radiating off the young man.

Hiccups smile threatened to split his face as he watched the massive dragon lay down and purr at the faintest of touch. "Thats a good girl. Toothless, come here." At the call of his name, the Night Fury quickly galloped over. Hiccup dug around in the travel sacks attached to Toothless side and pulled an eel out, which quickly earned a hiss of disapproval from Toothless. "Ah. There we are. Here you go." Hiccup held the eel out to the Typhoomerang, who graciously ate it and purred. Hiccup looked around at its body and felt a wave of anger rise in him. The dragon had obviously been tortured and with the amount of old scars, it had to of been a long time. "Its ok." Hiccup murmured, scratching the dragons long neck. He could feel the the dragon shake violently as it let out a low whine, the dragon equivalent to crying.

Hiccup stood when the whining stopped and walked to the dragons massive legs. "Who ever built these surely knew how to restrain a dragon. Toothless," Hiccup turned his head to look at his friend. "I need you to go get Astrid." Toothless looked towards the Typhoomerang and a mutual understanding passed between them. Toothless grunted and took off towards the castle as Hiccup began the tedious work of removing the embedded weapons from the dragons hide.

"So...you're telling me he knocked down the entire torch?" Merida asked incredulously. Astrid laughed and nodded her head.

"Yep. Not to mention that it rolled and freed all the captured dragons. Its a wonder how he didn't kill himself those nights. Or how the village didn't manage to do the job themselves."

"Was he really that bad?"

"Worse."

"\_Really?\_" Astrid nodded her head yes. Merida mouthed a 'wow' as the two females continued walking down the halls. It was mid afternoon and nearly time for lunch.

"You think Hiccup will show for lunch?" Astrid laughed and shook her head no.

"We'll be lucky if he shows up for dinner. He's probably off adding more stuff to the map. I swear he can't go a day without adding something new to it. Give him a week of \_not \_fiddling with it. Odin give him strength." Astrid laughed.

"Any chance I'd be able to see this map?"

Astrid shrugged. "You'd have to ask Hiccup. He gets pretty defensive of it though. Which is understandable. I mean, it is the most detailed map of the archipelago there ever was and probably ever will be." Astrid spoke as she rounded another corner and down a flight of stairs. A familiar black dragon raced towards the pair and both Astrid and Merida smiled at him. "Speaking of Loki. Where's Hiccup, Toothless?" Toothless nudged Astrid and whined before galloping away and shaking his head for them to follow. Merida and Astrid shared a look before quickly chasing after the Night Fury, both wondering what



had happened.

"Easy. I know it hurts. Just relax." Hiccup whispered as he removed an arrow. He wiped a piece of cloth over the wound, a greenish pus oozing out. Hiccup sighed and shook his head. She was cooler than what she should be, and most of her wounds were infected. Hiccup let out a sigh as he continued with his work. A soft grumble from behind and both Hiccup and his newest friend looking behind them. Toothless burst through the trees followed by Astrid on Stormfly with Merida sitting behind her.

Merida let out a soft gasp at the sight of the massive Typhoomerang. Astrid quickly dismounted and slowly approached the shivering dragon. Hiccup cooed and scratched her neck as the two girls approached. Astrid held her hand out and softly scratched her head, earning a low purr. "What are you doing so far from home girl?" Astrid mumbled as she gazed at the wounds along her body.

"Is she going to be ok?" Merida asked.

"Dragons are very resilient animals. But she's been through a lot. We'll have to take this one step at a time." Hiccup said, removing the last of the weapons and proceeding to clean her wounds, Astrid helping.

"You think you could take care of this?" Hiccup asked, looking between Astrid and Merida. Astrid nodded her head.

"Of course, but where are you going?" Astrid stood and placed her hands on her hips. Hiccup was checking his gear and mounting Toothless.

"Going to find out who did this to her."

"But Hiccup. She could have flown here. You have no idea where the people that did this live." Merida spoke, standing up from scratching the Typhoomerang's long neck. She whined from the lack of attention, but remained laying down.

"Look at her. She's dehydrated and famished. There's no way she could have flown here. She walked by land and if the marks I saw further south mean anything, her captures are that way."

Hiccup put his helmet on and clicked his prosthetic into place. Astrid grabbed his hand mid motion and he looked over at her. "Be careful ok. If they can do that to a Typhoomerang we don't want to know what they'll do to you." Hiccup nodded his head.

"I'll be back for dinner. If not you know which direction I'm heading." Astrid nodded her head and back up, giving Hiccup and Toothless plenty of room to take off. In a heartbeat, Toothless was airborne and Astrid followed them until they disappeared into the horizon.

**\*\*Well, how was it?\*\***

**\*\*Here it is! Chapter 24! I hope you all enjoy it!\*\***

**\*\*R&R!\*\***

## Chapter 24

An old foe returns

"I swear. He has to get involved in anything and everything that involves dragons." Astrid groaned as she finished cleaning the last of the Typhoomerangs wounds; the massive dragon nudged her in appreciation. "Well. He's good at it at least." Merida chipped in, bandaging one of the larger wounds.

"Thats what scares meâ€|"

"Pardon?"

"Hiccups the best dragon rider. Dragons absolutely love him. There isn't a dragon problem that he can't solve."

"And how is this a problem?"

"The worlds a big place. Dragons make it a little bit smaller. Sooner or later we're going to encounter a problem that Hiccup won't be able to handle. The Red Death was a single Queen dragon and it cost him his leg. Don't you think that their or bigger, more dangerous dragons out there? I mean, where theres a Queen there has to be a King right?"

"Thats a scary thought Astrid." Merida spoke.

"It is. And thats what scares me. It makes me nervous when he's gone too long. I nearly lost him once Merida. Its a feeling I don't want to ever experience again and I'll make sure I never have to again."

Hiccup leaned over as he looked at the trail of destruction. From the air it was a pretty obvious path with the gaps in the forest and burn marks on the ground. A stack of smoke in the distance confirmed their target. "There bud, lets land awhile away." Toothless grunted an acknowledgement as he dipped down to land.

Hiccup swiftly dismounted and changed positions on the tail fin, allowing Toothless to fly solo. "Alright bud. I'm going to go up ahead alone. I need you to stay here. If these people are capturing dragons it would be bad enough if they get a hold of me, worse even if they get their hands on a Night Fury." Toothless growled in disapproval and rubbed his head in Hiccups chest. "Aw you big baby. Don't worry. I'll be right back." Toothless grumbled but laid down, waiting for his friends return.

Tents and large cages were scattered throughout the vast clearing. From his vantage point, he could spot a few Deadly Nadders, a Monstrous Nightmare, a pair of Zipplebacks, and-"By Thor they have a whispering deathâ€| " Hiccup looked over at a large metal cage that held the legendary dragon. Two soldiers walked by and Hiccup ducked down. Polished armored glimmering as they walked by. Hiccups hands

fisted as he knew who they were.

"Romans. Had to be Romans. Couldn't be Vikings. Noooo, that would make things too easy." A cloaked man burst through a tent as he tossed another man to the ground.

"What do you mean its gone!" Roared the cloaked man as he stood in the middle of a the camp. A man in front of him lowered his head and was shaking in absolute fear.

"It-it uh-we didn't see it-and when it-uh-" With a roar, the cloaked man struck the other man in the face, sending him back to the floor. Nose broken, he slowly got up to his knees and whimpered in fear. "I'm sorry sir! I didn't mean-"

"Do you have any idea how much you compromised this campaign!" The cloak man roared, throwing another punch at the mans bruising face.

"Mercy! Please sir!" A hard kick landed on the man's stomach that left the man gasping for breath.

"Mercy?! I have no use for such a pitiful concept." He landed a hard kick to the man's skull and the whimpering stopped.

"Now. If I hear about another escaped dragon a concussion will be the least of your concerns because I will be feeding you to them. Clean this mess up." With that, the cloak figure retreated into a large tent, leaving his subordinates to drag the unconscious man away.

"Ok. I think I've seen enough." Hiccup turned and was greeted by the point end of a Roman Gladius at his throat.

"And where do you think your going boy?"

"You sure she'll be fine there?" Merida sked as the pair returned to the castle.

"You said not many people go there right?"

"Yes but-"

>"She'll be fine, and just to make sure we'll tell your father about her. No doubt he'll want to meet her too." Astrid said as the entered the great hall. A small Terrible Terror squeaked and flew towards her. It was light green and slightly bigger than Bonnlose.<p>

"Two letters in one day?" Merida questioned, as Astrid untied the letter.

"Did something else happen?"

"No. Its a direct reply from our last message. Was expecting Stoick to react like this, but not so quickly." Astrid continued reading and her eyes widened in surprise.

"We better go get your dad." Merida raised an eyebrow.

"Why? Is something wrong?"

"No. He should be expecting visitors soon."

"Huh?"

"Stoicks paying DunBroch a visit."

Hiccup raised his arms in surrender. Two soldiers grabbed him and forced him to the center of the camp. One grabbed his sword and tossed it aside. "Whats this?" The other spoke as he held up a capsule of Zibbleback gas.

"I'd put that back if I were you."

"I'll do whatever I want." With that the man tucked it into his pocket. Hiccup shrugged.

"Suit yourself." Hiccup felt a blow to the back of the head and collapsed to his knees.

"Keep it up and I swear that I'll-"

"We don't do anything till the boss says so." A soldier spoke rigidly, standing at attention and facing the tent. With a grumble, the other soldier agreed and stood on the other side of Hiccup.

"Mind telling me who this boss of yours is?" Hiccup asked as he rubbed the back of his head. Another smack landed on Hiccups head.

"Do not speak unless spoken to."

"Pretty hard to speak if not spoken to." Another smack.

"Thats the point."

"You know there should be some laws that involve the treatment of prisoners." The man growled and hit him on the head once more and swiftly kicked him. He grunted in satisfaction before smacking him once more, for good measure.

The curtains to the tent opened and the cloaked man stepped out. "Well, well, well. What do we have here?" The man spoke in a sarcastic sneer.

"Just a simple farmer. I like to explore and I just happened to stumble upon this camp. Do you mind me asking, but what are those strange beasts over there?" Hiccup asked, pointing towards the dragon cages. "I've never seen anything-"

"Enough." Hiccup looked up at the man as he circled around.

"I know exactly who you are, Hiccup." From his position, Hiccup could spot a clear grin planted on his face, his hood covering his nose and up.

"Oh. I know you very well Hiccup. But I have to admit. I almost didn't recognize you after all these years."

Hiccup felt a cold chill run along his spin. "Do I know you?" The man

laughed.

"After all these years. I would hope you would." That voice, he knew that voice. It couldn't be though. He was long gone. A distant memory of a troubling time.

"Don't worry about dwelling on it though. Because you will remember me. And you will never forget me again. How could you? After all. I spent a few years hell bent on killing you and capturing that elusive Night Fury. Toothless was it?" Hiccup stiffened at the mention of his best friend.

"How do you-"

"I've already told you Hiccup. I know you very well. This entire plan was to get you here."

"What plan?" The man let out a loud laugh as he spun around to face Hiccup.

"This. This entire plan. The dragons attacking Scotland. A noble dragon trainer answering a call for help. The 'assassination' attempts. The captured dragon trainers. Your father coming to Scotland."

"How do you know-my father's coming to Scotland?" Hiccup spoke suddenly, eyes looking up at the cloaked man.

"Guess you didn't receive that message quite yet. Nevertheless. My plans going perfectly!"

"But why Scotland? There's nothing to gain."

"Exactly."

"What?"

"What better place to attack than a place that holds no value?" Hiccup looked at the man in bewilderment.

"You're crazy. Completely and utterly crazy."

"I prefer deranged." Hiccup stiffened and looked towards the cloaked man. A face taking shape behind the hood.

"It can't be." An evil chuckle emanated from the man as he removed his hood. The right part of his face was horrifically burned. A huge evil grin spread across his face as he stared at the wide-eyed Hiccup.

"What's the matter Hiccup. You seem like you've just seen a ghost." Hiccup looked on at complete shock at the man who stood in front of him.

"Dagur."

"You're dead. You're supposed to be dead. We-I saw you fall."

"Well I'm not. And I have some unfinished business to attend to. With

Stoick arriving soon and with the other lords already staying at DunBroch we'll have all the leaders of the most powerful nations of the north all under one roof. Being dealt such a blow, Berk and the Highlands won't be able to mount a resistance as the Roman Legions and my masters dragons sweep across your lands. Rome will have Scotland while I rule the archipelago." Dagur chuckled evilly, continueing on his circular path around Hiccup.

Hiccup reeled at the news. He could do it. Now was the perfect opportunity. The Highlands would be thrown into chaos with the death of the King and Queen, not to mention the lords and their sons. It would be easy. Hel, showing up with an army \_and\_ dragons alone would send any organized army running. A disorganized mob has no chance.

Then there was Berk and the archipelago. Berk could hold its own. Or at least take enough of Dagurs men that the rest of the archipelago would stand a chance. Hopefully. He could be greatly underestimating Dagurs forces and the entire Archipelago could fall. Dagur should know this.

"You don't have enough forces to take Scotland and the archipelago Dagur. Even with your Roman allies." Dagur laughed hysterically at this.

"You underestimate the might of the Roman empire. They have pledged an entire \_legion\_. Five thousand battle hardened troops. Thats just the front line men, include the support infantry and reserves. They have well over eight thousand troops. I personally command one hundred dragons. Ten of which you've been dealing with these past few days. Hiccups eyes widened at this.

"How have you gotten so many dragons?"

"Now where would be the fun if I tell you all my secrets now, Hiccup?" Dagur sneered, patting Hiccup like he was some type of helpless child.

"We'll stop you Dagur. We won't go down quietly." Hiccup said, fighting to stand but being forced back down to his knees.

"Oh Hiccup. My dear friend. I hope you go down in a blaze of glory. It would be so much more satisfying when you die. I mean, who wants to see the great \_'Dragon conquer'\_ die in a small \_poof\_? Unfortunately, now is not your time. Release him." Both Hiccup and his guards looked up in shock at Dagur.

"But sir! Why not just end him here? It would be so much easier and it'll be guaranteed." Dagur growled and punched the Roman soldier.

"Because you fool." Dagur turned and grinned down at Hiccup. "His fate is sealed. He will die. After watching all his friends die around him. Only then will he die. Because the curse is upon him. Its creeping through his body, killing his heart. And he shall die as sure as fish eggs are fish eggs. Because nobody escapes the curse of the veno-"

An all too familiar roar interrupted Dagurs monologue as a purple blast struck the tent behind Dagur, instantly igniting it. Dagur

scowled and looked up as a black dragon dived down at the camp. "Looks like your friend is here to rescue you. Too bad he was too late." With that, Dagur turned and ran off to the forest. The Romans within the camp took up defensive positions around Hiccup as Toothless landed. "Alright bud, let's get out here." Hiccup spoke, grabbing his sword and climbing up on top of Toothless. As soon as Hiccup's prosthetic clicked into place, the pair took off into the night sky. "Alright bud. Let's get to DunBroch as fast as we can. Dagur's back."

**\*\*So, how was it?\*\***

## 25. Chapter 25

**\*\*A\N\*\***

**\*\*Eh. Hi. I'm really sorry about the extremely long wait. I have no idea where the time went and it wasn't until New Years that I realized how long it's been. I promise I'll try my hardest to get the next chapter up as soon as possible. Unfortunately it seems like the story may be reaching its climax and ending. Don't worry. I have some ideas for a sequel and do intend to write other FanFics based around the HTTYD & Brave universe. Thank you all for you patients.\*\***

## Chapter 25

### War Begins

"Da!" Merida called as they entered the great hall. Her father and mother sat at the head of the table with Hamish, Hubert and Harris sitting beside them. All the lords and their children were seated towards the end of the large table. A seat remained open on one side with the young lords' sons that was closer to her parents, obviously reserved for her. Two more seats on the opposite side were left opened reserved for Hiccup and Astrid.

Merida blushed slightly as all the eyes turned towards her. She had forgotten about the lords' unexpected arrival. "Merida! Come here lass. Supper is just about to begin." Fergus waved for her to come sit down before he looked over at Astrid and over her shoulder, looking for Hiccup. "Is the lad alright? We haven't seen him all day." Astrid looked towards Merida, wondering who's job it was to inform him and today's recent events.

"Uh. Not really. We sorta found a new friend." Everyone at the table looked at each other surprised before looking back at Merida. Merida looked at Astrid, knowing she'd do better at introducing the dragon.

Seeing the silent cue, Astrid stepped forward. "Hiccup found an injured Typhoomerang in the woods." All eyes turned towards Astrid.

"Typhoo-a-what?" Ailbert Macintosh spoke, looking incredulously at Astrid. Astrid rolled her eyes.

"Typhoomerang. Very large dragon. Spins like a top and burns the ground." Astrid spoke, eyes remaining on the King, Queen and the

three lords.

"Hiccup found her injured in the forest. By the looks of it she's been tortured. For a long time." Murmurs erupted around the table.

"Tortured? How? Who?" Lord MacGuffin spoke.

"That's what Hiccup went to go find out." Merida spoke, dividing attention between her and Astrid.

"Great. Just great." Fergus spoke, slumping into his seat and earning a glare from Elinor.

"Lets hope Hiccup finds these people and figures out their intentions." Elinor spoke.

"Theres one more thing you should know." Merida spoke.

"Stoick the Vast of Berk is paying a visit to DunBroch." Astrid finished. The table turned deathly quiet as everyone looked at the pair as if the had just sprouted wings.

"Welp. There goes the kingdom." Lord Macintosh spoke.

The beating of dragon wings vibrated through the castle walls. Both King Fergus and Queen Elinor sat in the throne room, awaiting their latest visitors. It had been a little over an hour since they learned Stoick the Vast of Berk would be coming to DunBroch. Merida sat beside them, having cleaned up and put on a purple dress. Astrid stood beside her as the triplets were escorted in by Maudie. "What do they look like?" Merida whispered to Astrid.

"Stoicks as big as your father, probably bigger." Merida nodded her head reluctantly and glanced towards her father. Stoick must be an awfully big man. The hum that vibrated through the walls stopped abruptly and all eyes trained towards the door to the halls.

"Oh Hiccup. You better hurry up. Stoicks not going to like this." Astrid spoke softly.

With a loud bang, the doors to the hall burst open. Six long shadows spread into the hall as their corresponding bodies entered. In the lead, a large man stepped into the fire light. "Fergus." He spoke.

"Stoick." Fergus acknowledge, standing up. "I wish it was under better terms."

"Wasn't that great of terms the last time." Stoick said approaching the throne, the five other members of his entourage following suit. Merida looked towards Astrid.

"Who are they?" Astrid glanced towards Merida then towards the second largest man in the group.

"See that man to Stoicks right?" Merida nodded her head. "Thats Gobber. Stoicks oldest friend and Hiccups mentor. The two to Gobbers right," Merida glanced at the blonde boy and girl, "Ruffnut and Tuffnut Thorston, their twins. On Stoicks left, Snotlout Jorgeson.



Hiccup's cousin." Merida's eyes widened at this. The two looked nothing alike, at all. Where Hiccup was lean, Snotlout was muscular; where Hiccup was tall, Snotlout was short.

"The large man to his left is Fishlegs, one of Hiccup's closest friends."

"Astrid," The pair jumped at Stoick's call, seeing the large man look around then look back to Astrid.

"Where's Hiccup?"

Astrid paled slightly. "Well, you see chief. Hiccup's not exactly here at the moment."

"\_What do you mean he's not here at the moment?"\_ Stoick's eyes burned into Astrid. Astrid flinched at the venom in the words. Hey, even the toughest of vikings would flinch under Stoick's vast iron gaze.

"We found an injured Typhoomerang in the woods. It's been tortured. Hiccup left to find out who did it." Merida spoke, alleviating the burning gaze Stoick had on Astrid. Stoick glanced at Merida and sighed.

"Figures it had something to do with a dragon. Astrid." Stoick looked over at the Viking who perked up at the call of her name.

"Go find him. Ruff, Tuff. Follow her."

"Yes chief." The three turned and ran down the hall.

"Fishlegs, Gobber. Go take care of the Typhoomerang. Make sure it's in a good enough condition to take back to the Archipelago."

"Righty o." Gobber spoke before turning and walking out followed by Fishlegs. Gobber stopped abruptly and turned.

"Uh. Where exactly is it?" Stoick looked over at Merida.

"I'll go with ye." Merida spoke standing.

"Be careful." Elinor spoke up. Merida turned and smiled at her mom before following the two vikings out of the hall.

"Now Stoick. We have some business to attend to."

"Aye, we do." With that Stoick, Fergus and Elinor retreated to the castle's library.

Toothless glided through the air. Instead of the calmness that came with their normal flights, both him and his rider were tense and actively looking around. "I don't like this Toothless." Hiccup looked over the side to see a long line of camp fires. "Dagur wasn't bluffing. By the looks of it, it's an entire legion alright. Luckily the darkness kept them hidden from sight. Hiccup looked forward, the light from the castle illuminating the darkness on the horizon. By the looks of it, the army was at least a few hours' march away. Most likely resting to prepare for the assault that will most likely occur in the morning.

"Hiccup!" Hiccup looked behind him to see Astrid with Ruff and Tuff following close behind. Hiccup waved. "Meet me at the castle!"

"Did you find them?"

"Yep."

"Who is it?"

"Romans and you're not going to believe who's leading them."

"Who, Grendel?" Tuffnut said bitterly.

"Worse." The already chilly atmosphere dropped a few degrees.

"Who is it?" Astrid spoke.

"Dagur."

"\_Dagur! \_You're talking about Dagur the\_ deranged?"\_ Tuffnut looked in shock and horror at Hiccup, the look mimicked on his companions. Even barf and belch looked worried.

"No way! He's dead. \_You \_killed him! We all saw it. There's no way anyone could survive-"

"That's enough Ruffnut." Astrid hissed looking from Ruffnut towards Hiccup. His gaze was locked on the castle in the distance, his face covered from his mask but obviously distressed. Astrid looked down towards Toothless, who shared a worried look with the female Viking. Stormfly gave a worried chirp and Astrid instinctively rubbed the side of her head. "I know girl. I'm worried too."

**\*\*OUTSIDE THE CASTLE\*\***

"So, you two knew Hiccup all his life?" Merida asked as she lead them to where the Typhoomerang was currently kept. "Aye. I knew that young lad since he was a baby. Taught him everything he knows about blacksmithing. Well, almost everything. The inventions the lad has are all his known. Thor knows any other viking wouldn't be able to comprehend, let alone design such contraptions." Gobber spoke, interrupting Fishlegs just as his mouth opened.

"So...what he said about losing his leg is true?"

"Depends on what he said." Fishlegs spoke, this time interrupting Gobber.

"Giant dragon?"

"Aye. Largest dragon any of us have ever encountered. Had to burn my undies after that one."

"Thats something I didn't need to know." Merida muttered to herself.

"It gets worse." Fishlegs grumbled.

A quick cuff to the back of the head abruptly stopped his grumbling.

"Hey! Those were my favorite pair! They were so soft, like a babies bottom. Paid for them with a freshly made axe I did."

"You go to fight a giant dragon in your favorite underwear?" Merida spoke, raising an eyebrow.

"Aye. Well. The giant dragon part was a bit of a surprise. And left a bit of a surprise," He leaned down towards Fishlegs. "If you know what I mean."

"I think we both know what you mean, Gobber." Fishlegs grumbled more. Meridas look of disgust made him chuckle.

"What he says is true though Merida. Most of the vikings that went to fight on the nest wore their best clothes."

"Why's that?"

"Ha! Well you don't want to go to Valhalla in your worse now do ya?" Gobber interjected as they rounded a corner. The Typhoomerang sat waiting patiently, upon seeing seem it slowly got up.

"There she is." Merida spoke.

"We'll take it from here lass." Gobber spoke, slowly approaching the Typhoomerang, who was shifting uncomfortably at the strange faces.

"You won't need any help?" Merida asked as Gobber placed a calming hand on the frightened dragon, who immediately welcomed the warm hand.

"We've done this plenty of times before. But if Hiccup arrives could you let us know?" Fishlegs spoke, opening a bag of different medicines to begin the lengthy task of healing the dragon. Merida nodded her head and turned to head back to the castle. A flash of light from above caught their attention. "Nevermind. Looks like the lad is back." Gobber spoke. From their position the could distinguish the shape of a Nadder and Zippleback, followed closely by the legendary outline of a Night Fury. "Go on lass, don't wanna be missed now." Merida nodded her head and turned back to the castle, wondering if Hiccup found the people who tortured the gentle giant that was the Typhoomerang.

Hiccup landed with a soft "ooph", the days events rattling the boy to a state of utter exhaustion. Dagur, the young man who declared war against the Hooligans was alive. He pushed the thoughts away. Now was not the time to dwell on the past. At this very moment an entire Roman Legion supported by dragons was at the castles gates. He had to inform the King and Queen. Hopefully they'll have enough time to evacuate the castle.

"Whats the plan Hiccup?" Astrid spoke, dismounting Stormfly and jogging towards the Viking heir.

"We warn the castle. Defend it if we can't get everyone out. Ruff, Tuff. You stay above the castle. Warn us if you see anything suspicious." The dynamic duo nodded their heads and took off skyward.

"Are you ok?" Astrid asked, placing a comforting hand on Hiccups shoulder.

"Ya. I will be." Hiccup spoke, giving her a soft smile. She returned it.

"Best be on our way then."

"So, thats the terms then." Stoick spoke leaning his large frame against the back of a chair.

"Are they acceptable?" Elinor spoke, folding a piece of paper in half. Stoick cast his gaze upwards.

"If you require further compensationâ€¦" Fergus spoke.

"Its not the money. Never had a use for it up north."

"Then what are you concerned about?"

The door to the library opened up and Hiccup walked in. "Hi dad." Stoick immediately stood and walked over to him.

"Good to see you still have all the body parts you left with." Stoick chuckled, slapping him on the shoulder affectionately.

"And I see you've been spending a lot of time with Gobber." Hiccup spoke, smiling up at his dad as he rubbed his shoulder. Stoick let out a hearty laugh.

"The man has been awfully lonely without his apprentice to keep him company in the shop." The joyfully atmosphere turned somber as Stoick changed topic.

"Did you find out who tortured the Typhoomerang?" Hiccup nodded his head.

"And you aren't going to like who it is. Any of you." Hiccup looked towards the Elinor and Fergus, who by now were standing next to them. Stoick frowned deeply.

"Who is it?"

"Dagur." Stoick blinked in surprise.

"Dagur? Dagur the deranged?" Hiccup nodded his head in confirmation.

"Who's Dagur?" Fergus spoke.

"A monster more than a man. We have to move quick. While we have the upper hand." Stoick moved past his son towards the door.

"He already knows you're here." Hiccup spoke, stopping Stoick in his tracks.

"This entire thing was his idea. The assassination attempts, the attacks on Dunbroch and the Highlands. All of it. Just to get the most powerful leaders of the North in one location. Dad, he has a Roman Legion with him."

Stoick looked from his son to Fergus and Elinor. "Do you have enough manpower to hold the castle?"

"Against a Roman Legion?" He frowned. "No. We can hold them at bay, but we can't hold on if they get over the walls. Then there's the issue with the dragons..."

"Don't worry about the dragons. We'll take care of them. Hiccup, send a message to Berk. Tell Spitelout to recall all the dragon riders and send them here. We'll hold out as long as we can. In the meantime we evacuate as much of the castle as we can." Stoick turned from Hiccup to Fergus. "Agreed?"

Fergus face was grim. "Agreed."

## 26. Chapter 26

**\*\*Uh. Hi there. Bet you didn't see this update happening. Well. Neither did I. Hope you all enjoy the impromptu chapter!\*\***

### Chapter 26

#### The Siege of DunBroch

"Macintosh, MacGuffin, DingWall. Get your men ready and to the walls." Fergus barked, moving swiftly to his throne and pushing it aside, revealing an extensive armory.

"Whats going on?" Macintosh spoke, springing to his feet.

"The Romans are marching on the castle and it appears the have a sizable dragon force to accompany them." Fergus grabbed a long sword and tossed it to Dingwall. Elinor walked down the stairs followed by Stoick and Hiccup.

"Chief Stoick and Hiccup are going to try and hold them off. Our job is to defend the walls and evacuate the castle." Fergus spoke, a column of men quickly forming in the hall to gather weapons and armor. Merida walked into the hall just as Elinor reached the halls doors. Upon seeing the commotion Merida looked worriedly up at her mom. "Whats going on?"

"Merida!" Elinor spoke, quickly grabbing her daughter into a hug. "I need you to go get your brothers and make sure their with Maudie. Then I need you to change. Remember that archer outfit your father bought you?"

"The one you tried to throw away?"

"That's the one." Elinor smiled softly. "I need you to put it on. Then I need you to help the young lords evacuate the castle."

"Evacuate the castle?! Mom what-"

"We're about to be attacked Merida. I need you to remain calm and listen. Me and the house servants are going to try and get as much of the tapestries and journals out as we can. I need someone to make

sure the castle is evacuated in the meantime." Merida looked over at Hiccup, who just finished tying a letter to Bonnlose. The tiny dragon chirped and took off.

"And what about Hiccup and the other dragon riders?"

"They'll slow them down as long as they can. Now I need you to hurry. No more questions, go!" Merida hesitated and bit her lip before lunging out and giving her mom one last hug.

"I love you." Elinor smiled.

"I love you too my wee lass. I'll see you when this is all over." With that the two broke apart, Merida to save the people of the Castle, Elinor to save the culture history of it.

Hiccup glanced over at Merida as she ran up the stairs. He hoped she could get everyone out in time. "Whats the plan Hiccup?" Astrid spoke as Fishlegs and Gobber arrived.

"Typhoomerangs all patched up. She'll be fine in a few days time to fly back to Berk." Fishlegs spoke, quitting as he looked around the busy castle.

"Whats going on?"

"Seems to me they're preparing for a fight." Gobber spoke.

"Aye. Theres a Roman Legion breathing down their necks. It doesn't help they have dragons too." Stoick spoke, his massive arms folded across his chest.

"Well we never turn from a fight. Whats the plan?" Gobber spoke. All eyes turned to Hiccup. With a deep sigh, Hiccup spoke.

"We keep them as far from the castle as we can. Theres a bridge across a ravine. We take it out and it should force them around and up through the plains. One less area to worry about defending. The hill should buy Fergus's archers time to pick them off. Gobber, you and Fishlegs are on close support, any heavy weapons they have take them out. Meatlug and Grump are slow but pack a heavy punch. Astrid, Dad, you two are on mid support. Engage any dragons approaching the castle. Be careful with the Mjolnir's, you'll need to work together to take them on. Its the only chance you will have."

"Hiccup!"

The group turned to see Tuff running through the main halls. "We got dragons in the distance!"

"How many?" Stoick spoke quickly.

"Forty, give or take a dozen behind them."

"Didn't know you could count that high." Gobber muttered. Stoick sent him a quick glare.

"Foot soldiers?"

"None so far."

"Alright. Then that means its up to use for now. Tuff, I need you and Ruff in reserve. When the infantry arrives I need you to cause some havoc in their lines."

"Ha! This may be fun after all!" The male twin cackled, turning and running back out to rejoin his other demonic half.

"Sorta makes you feel bad for the Romans." Gobber spoke.

"Just a little." Stoick gruffly spoke.

"Well if thats settled," all eyes turned to Hiccup, "lets ready up."

Merida opened the door to her room. She had cornered her brothers and told them to stay by maudie, who would be with the first group to leave the castle. On her bed laid a light green outfit. She smiled at the clothes. She had been gifted the outfit for her birthday last year by her father. Quickly changing, she wrapped her quiver around her waist to complete the outfit. It was green all around with white trimming around her elbows and shoulders. It loosely hugged her body allowing her to swiftly and effortlessly perform with her bow while maintaining a form fit. Satisfied, she grabbed her bow and began to run the throne room. Passing by a window, a shadow caught her eye. Merida abruptly stopped and turned to look out the window. What caught her attention was a sight that would not be compared till the great air battles of the world wars.

Dozens of dragons formed up on the horizon. Each a variety the young princess has yet to see. Meridas heart sunk as she saw a small band of dragons fly towards the numerically superior force. She was captivated by the sight. If it wasn't for the panicked yells coming from the courtyard she could have stood there and watched the fight. Composing herself, she made her way towards the courtyard and mentally prepared herself for what was going to be a long journey.

Hiccup released a breath, besides him rode his comrade in arms, Astrid. She had been a true godsend lately. With her by his side Hiccup was confident that they stood a chance in this fight. They were still in for a long fight though. A fight that would forever alter the course of history, whether or not it would be for the good only the gods will know. They were upon the dragons now, Hiccup tensed as did Toothless. 'Climb!' Hiccup called out. Obediently, both Toothless and Stormfly began to swiftly climb and disappear into the sky. Staying in formation, the other dragons did not alter course. There was no swaying them from their objective. "Alright bud. This is good." Toothless leveled off and looked down, they were a few hundred feet above them and were in a position where the sun was directly behind them. Leaning towards the side, Hiccup braced himself and Toothless rolled and looped, now positioned behind the hostile dragons. Hiccup glanced to his right to see Astrid beside him. She glanced towards him and with a slight nod, the duo began their dive. Toothless tucked his wings in and aimed downwards. A low through the forests as Toothless built up speed. "Quick burst bud, hit as many as you can." Hiccup hollered over the wind. Toothless gave a sharp nod of understanding and released a series of small plasma blasts. Before any of the dragons could react twelve of them were already falling out of the sky and into the trees. The only source of the attack a

black blur that zoomed past them. Enraged the dragons turned to engage the riders as Astrid released a firestorm on their formation, quickly breaking it apart.

Disorganized, the inexperienced dragons were no match as Hiccup and Toothless spun around and delivered a less devastating frontal attack. Adjusting to the returning attack, the dragons turned to give chase to Hiccup only to meet another firestorm as Astrid and Stormfly sprayed fire at them, covering Hiccups escape and allowing him to regain altitude. With their combined attacks, Hiccup and Astrid had virtually halted the dragons advance towards the castle. "We're looking good bud." Hiccup spoke as he turned once again in his grunted and rolled, coming up once again behind the dragons and delivering a series of shots. Fire rocketed behind Hiccup as a few frustrated dragons fired fruitlessly at them. Hiccup let out a small smile. So far so good. "Hiccup! We got more inbound!" Astrid called, flying up beside him. The first wave of dragons dealt with and withdrawing.

"Alright. Seems like they have nadders and nightmares with them this time. Their most likely a more experienced group of dragons." At this four dragons separated from the main group and headed straight to Astrid and Hiccup.

"Just as I thought. They're going to try and keep us from the main group."

"What do we do?"

"Well their nightmares, we'll gain altitude and use our speed to fly past them and hit the main group. By the time they catch up we'll have caused enough damage for us to regain altitude and hit again."

"And if they shoot at us before we get past?"

Hiccup smiled. "Don't get hit." Astrid rolled her eyes.

"Thanks for the advice." With that, the pair of dragon riders began their attack.

The castle was in a state of near panic. The dragons were making people nervous and the sheer number of them were terrifying. Merida burst out of the castles doors, seeing soldiers run towards their post and others trying to reinforce the gates as much as they can. Peasants grabbed what ever valuables they could and began to huddle near the courtyard, wondering where to go. Merida stood up on a barrel, her stomach dropping further as she saw a second wave of dragons approaching the castle. A guard nearby ran up beside her. "The first group has left the castle and are in the tree line, the prince's are with them." Merida gave a curt nod as she stepped off the barrell.

"Make sure food and water is next as soon as the second group clears the yard." The guard nodded and began to move the second group out as Merida began walking up to people, ensuring they had everything and needed anything. A panicked cry made her look towards the sky.

"HICCUP!" At the call of his name, Hiccup looked towards Astrid who



was pointing towards the sun. Hiccup glanced towards the sun only to be greeted with a black shadow. "DOWN!" Hiccup yelled. Instinctively, Toothless tucked his wings in and they dropped like a rock to avoid the merciless collision. Apparently the shadow had other plans for Hiccup as fire chased after them. Hiccup laid as flat as he could as Toothless closed his wings and spun, dispersing the fire and causing little harm. Once Toothless opened his wings Hiccup sat up, steam and burnt flakes of leather ripping off into the wind. Looking back at his attacker Hiccup felt his stomach drop to the forest floor.

"Dagur."

"Hello Hiccup, dear. It looks like we meet again." Dagur spoke, beneath him flew the one creature capable of taking on a Night Fury, a Mjolnir. The creature let out a menacing growl towards Toothless, which was returned in its full ferocity by the Night Fury. Dagur let out synyster sneer. "You know. I'll still let you join me. Even after you transgressions against me." Hiccup frowned.

"You and I both know you'll kill me the moment you can." At this Dagur actually smiled.

"Of course. If it was up to me I wouldn't even hesitate to kill you right now." Hiccup scrunched up his eyebrows.

"Then why offer me to join you?"

"Because Hiccup. I am not alone in this quest."

Now Hiccup was really confused. What did he mean by that. Dagur had always been the one to strive for control over dragons. Unlessâ€¦|. "Alvin." Hiccup spoke sourly. Dagur barked out a laugh.

"As if. We both know what happened to that sack of blubber."

"Then who-" Hiccup was interrupted as fire spewed towards Dagur. Unfortunately Dagur saw the attack coming and spun out of the way of the blast. Hiccup looked back towards the attacker to be greeted by a blue Nadder. "Astrid what are you-"

"What are YOU doing Hiccup?! He's stalling you!" She pointed behind her at the castle. By now the dragons had reached the outskirts and were bombarding the castle walls and courtyard with streams of fire. Hiccup mentally slapped himself. Of course! A chuckle from above caught their attention. "Oh. You have no idea what I'm about to do." Dagur chuckled; at that, the Mjolnir let out a stream of fire at the pair.

End  
file.